the weekly Standard

MAY 9, 2005

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THE VISIONARY

Tales from the Wolfowitz Era

by STEPHEN F. HAYES

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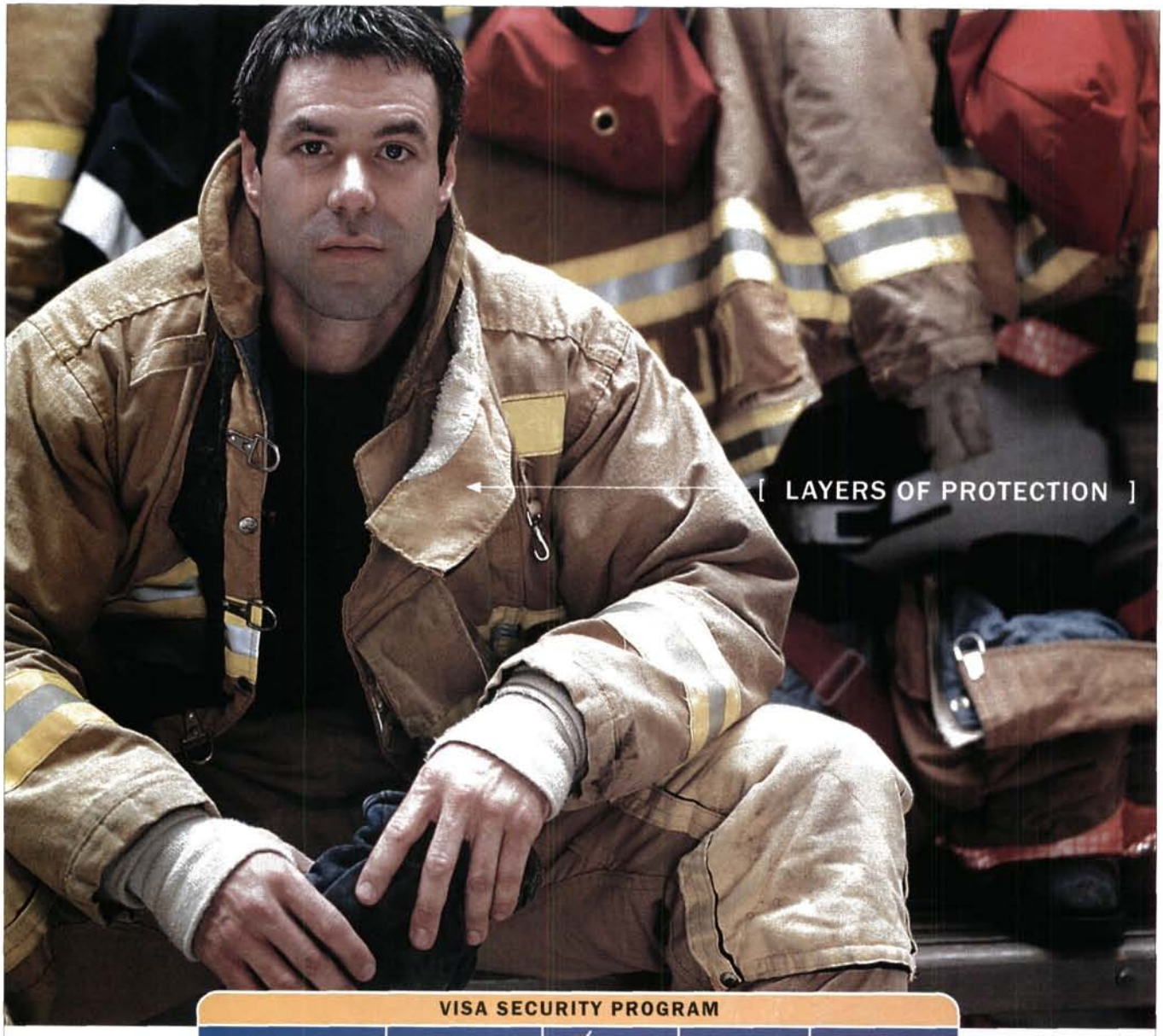

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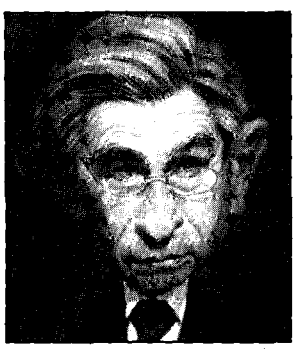

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'Kicking Down' (cont.)

A tip of THE SCRAPBOOK's cap to our readers: We asked for dirt on senators who "kick down," and you responded! This, after Democrats on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee like Joe Biden and Barbara Boxer had complained that John Bolton, President Bush's nominee for U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, was unfit for high office because he was allegedly rude to subordinates.

One of our correspondents volunteers "some fairly reliable hearsay"—always our favorite kind of hearsay—that "Ted Kennedy once called his own staff 'bastards' in a large meeting my colleagues were in—with lots of members and staff. It was a bioterrorism bill conference meeting, and he was told by a Republican conferee that his staff were holding up something he had agreed to. He turned around to his staff and yelled, 'You bastards, get it done!'"

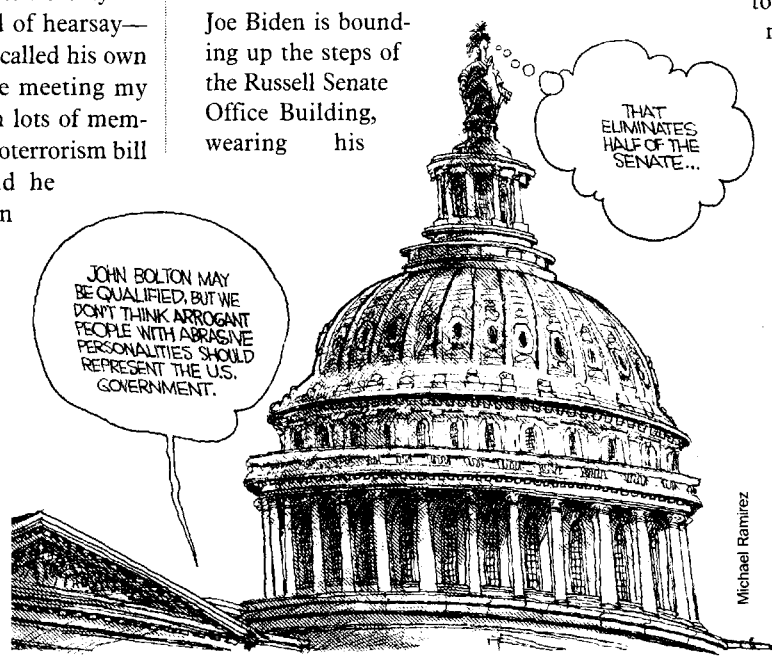
Another correspondent writes that "Joe Biden's assumption of the moral high ground in his treatment of John Bolton is particularly interesting coming, as it does, from a person reportedly kicked out of Syracuse Law School for cheating. He was readmitted, but the details of the affair were kept rather fuzzy."

As best we can determine, Biden flunked his legal methods class at Syracuse after handing in a plagiarized paper, and then was allowed to retake the class. But THE SCRAPBOOK wants to emphasize—to quote Senator Biden's own statement during the Bolton hearings—that all of the above "allegations are just that; they're allegations. They've not been substantiated, by and large. They're still allegations. And we've tried to look into them as best we can. We have shared all this information as it's come to us." Words to live by in these sorts of inquiries, both for respected public officials like those serving on the Senate Foreign Relations committee and respected journalistic institutions like THE SCRAPBOOK.

Yet another of our esteemed readers sends us this terrific anecdote from an October 2001 Michael Crowley piece in the *New Republic*:

Joe Biden is bounding up the steps of the Russell Senate Office Building, wearing his trademark grin. As he makes for the door, he is met by a group of airline pilots and flight attendants looking vaguely heroic in their navy-blue uniforms and wing-shaped pins. A blandly handsome man in a pilot's cap steps forward and asks Biden to help pass emergency benefits for laid-off airline workers. Biden nods as the men and women cluster around him with fawning smiles. Then he speaks. "I hope you will support my work on Amtrak as much as I have supported you," he begins. (Biden rides Amtrak to work every day and is obsessed with the railroad.) "If not, I will screw you badly."

A dozen faces fall in unison as Biden lectures on. "You've not been good to me. You're also damn selfish. You better listen to me. . . ." It goes on like this for a couple of minutes. Strangely, Biden keeps grinning—even fraternally slapping the stunned man's shoulder a couple of times. When we finally head into the building, Biden's communications director, Norm Kurz, turns to me. "What you just witnessed is classic Senator Biden."



We also received a nice note from Tim McPike, writing "as a former Senate staffer of Carter-Reagan vintage." Says McPike, "I can attest to observing (and in a few instances being on the receiving end of) the time-honored 'kicking down' behavior of several senators who could fairly be described as bullies. But more relevant to the issue of John Bolton's fitness is a personal anecdote about Bob Dole: Senator Dole wasn't above reaming his staff in public. Once, when I was standing in a hearing room waiting for a meeting to start, Dole and a quaking staffer walked in and stood next to me. I did my best to look oblivious of the tongue-lashing Dole was delivering, but he turned to me (I was not on his staff) and snarled, 'So, you find all this interesting?'

"The true measure of Dole's character was what happened next. With some heat, I protested, 'Senator, I was here first.' Dole arched an eyebrow, turned

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back to his staffer, and began an equanimous discussion of the meeting agenda.

"There is a difference between a boss with a temper and a bully."

Finally, we would be remiss in not noting last week's karmic convergence between the life stories of Senator Biden and one of the more colorful of Bolton's accusers, a former USAID contractor named Melody Townsel (founder, coincidentally, of the Dallas chapter of Mothers Opposing Bush). Biden, as it happens, memorably gave Townsel a national stage for her accusations at the Bolton hearings on April 19, when, having specified that her allegations were unsubstantiated, he proceeded to read them into the record: "The USAID worker in Kyrgyzstan alleges that she was harassed and—by—that's not sexually harassed—harassed by Mr. Bolton, who was then in private practice, representing a company. And he followed her through Moscow, she alleges. He banged on her door in the middle of the night, went to Kyrgyzstan before she got back there, saying she had absconded with U.S. funds and so on and so forth, and that she shouldn't be listened to. . . . That's what she alleges. I don't know if they're all true or not."

Last week, to her adoring fans at the lefty website *DailyKos.com*, Townsel confided that "Republicans have dredged up un [sic] unfortunate chapter of my life and, clearly, are about to announce it to the world. . . . When I was in college, 22 years ago, I plagiarized some columns while working for my college newspaper, and I was removed from staff. Months later, while working for another college newspaper, I wrote a review for a local play that tracked closely in format to another writer's review—and, although it was not plagiarized, it made my editors, who had become aware of my recent past, very uncomfortable, and we mutually agreed that I would no longer submit stories to them."

Naturally, this has no bearing whatsoever on Townsel's probity as a witness, and we imagine Senator Biden is looking forward to swearing her in for testimony and questioning when the Bolton hearings resume.

Meanwhile, we want to hear more. So keep those cards and letters coming to *scrapbook@weeklystandard.com*. We'd especially enjoy hearing Barbara Boxer anecdotes. And we don't mean those snarky comments about her personal appearance you've been sending. We've already forwarded enough of those to ABC's *Extreme Makeover*. ♦

Laurence Tribe Postscript

We neglected to note last week that Harvard president Larry Summers and law school dean Elena Kagan finally released the official findings of their investigation into the plagiarism charges against their distinguished colleague Laurence Tribe, first aired in these pages by Joseph Bottum. Guilty as charged. For more, much more, on the nuances of their report, visit the "Harvard Plagiarism Archive" at *authorskeptics.blogspot.com*. ♦

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Casual

Jockular Politics

John Kerry bore a good deal of mockery for his sports gaffes during the 2004 campaign. First he botched the details of Bill Buckner's famous '86 World Series error—after claiming to have been at the game. Then the Boston native praised Red Sox all-star "Manny Ortez" (he pronounced the surname Or-TEZZ)—apparently confusing Manny Ramirez and David Ortiz (pronounced Or-TEEZ). Finally, the *coup de grâce*: Kerry trekked to Green Bay and extolled the glory of Packer football at "Lambert"—instead of Lambeau—Field.

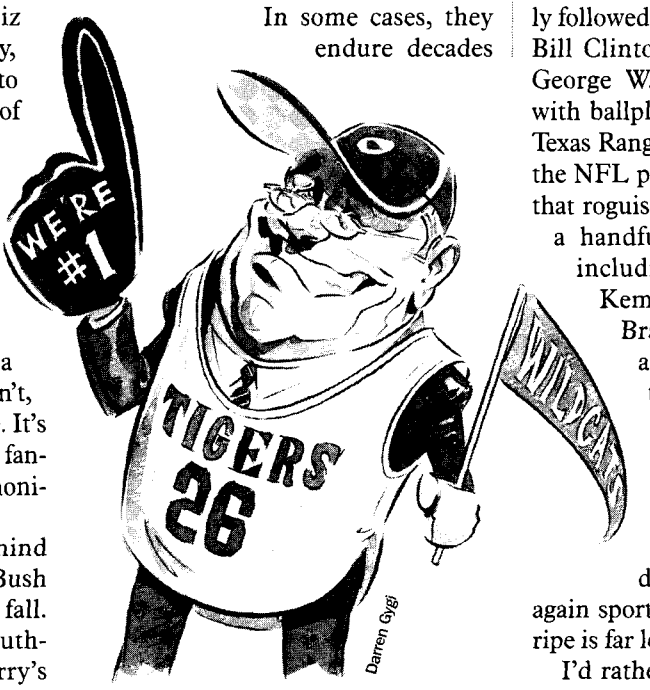
Now, I'm a sports fan—a big one. And the relatively few sports-junkie politicians out there tend to be my kind. But it's hardly criminal for a pol not to follow sports. Bob Dole, a stellar athlete in his own day, didn't, and he never pretended otherwise. It's the fake fans who irk me. Phony fandom can be a sign of a broader phoniness.

That was the rationale behind Football Fans for Truth, a pro-Bush 527 that sprang into action last fall. Among other things, the truth-hungry Fans publicized Kerry's "Lambert Field" blunder and jeered his less-than-artful throwing style (as evidenced by an opening pitch at Fenway that failed to reach home plate and an awkward pigskin toss on the campaign trail). "He is not fit to be our sports-fan-in-chief," said director Jeff Larroca.

The Fans' little campaign was a smashing success. At least they thought so. As their website proudly proclaims: "Football Fans for Truth notified the world that John Kerry throws like a girl."

Perhaps he does. But let's give Kerry a break. He was hardly the first aspiring politician to feign an enthusiasm for sports in order to cast himself as the Average-Joe candidate. Public figures, especially rich Boston Brahmins, naturally crave the sort of regular-guy street cred they think they can get from talking sports.

Truth is, the ranks of sports fans and politicians don't much overlap. Sports fans pledge their loyalty to a group of athletes they've never met. In some cases, they endure decades of heartbreak and near misses without going wobbly. They pour money and emotion into a venture utterly detached from personal expediency.



That's asking a lot of your typical Washington pol. Politics is a give and take. It often pivots on shrewd estimates of self-interest. Perhaps the most frequent calculation inside the Beltway is, "What's in it for me?" The logic of politics just doesn't align with the selfless zealotry of sports fandom.

Of course, that doesn't stop pols and lobbyists from occasionally flying their I'm-a-sports-nut-too flags. This baseball season, for example, we'll see boatloads of Beltway types travel to RFK Stadium to cheer on the Nationals. But most won't be there for the peanuts, Cracker Jack, and 6-4-3 double plays. They'll be there to be seen.

For Washington VIPs, dropping by a Nats game serves a dual purpose. It implicitly affirms one's status as a member of the Beltway elite, and it cloaks one in populist garments. After all, the bulk of the crowd at a baseball game consists of normal people. And mixing with "just plain folk" can humanize a politician.

This is not to say a bona fide love of politics never goes along with a real love of sports. Richard Nixon ardently followed baseball and the Redskins. Bill Clinton enjoyed college hoops. George W. Bush gets on famously with ballplayers and once owned the Texas Rangers. (And he was watching the NFL playoffs when he choked on that roguish pretzel.) For that matter, a handful of big-time athletes—including Gerald Ford, Jack Kemp, Jim Bunning, Bill Bradley, Steve Largent, and J.C. Watts—went on to distinguished political careers.

But the list of politicians who really qualify as sports fanatics is short. The list of pols who suddenly morph into born-again sports addicts when the time is ripe is far longer.

I'd rather they all took George W. Bush's example. During the 2002 World Cup, the president called U.S. soccer coach Bruce Arena to wish him luck before a big match against Mexico. "The country is really proud of the team," Bush said. "A lot of people that don't know anything about soccer, like me, are all excited and pulling for you."

I always felt that anecdote spoke volumes about Dubya's general lack of pretense. And despite his being a soccer novice, I think Bush is eminently fit to serve as our sports-fan-in-chief.

Duncan Currie

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Correspondence

Isolation Ward

Regarding Matt Labash's "The Ward Churchill Reality Tour" (April 25): As a University of Colorado graduate and the father of a current CU student, I am embarrassed by Ward Churchill. One truly has to question how this man became tenured at what I thought was a high quality state university. Until recently, Churchill was even head of the ethnic studies department, which tells us a great deal about his fellow professors.

It is quite clear that our public education system, from K-12 schools through the colleges and universities, is in many ways both morally and intellectually bankrupt. Churchill's "arguments" (if one can call them that) would never survive in any hard science discipline (or even real academic debate). Why are they so often the norm in the soft sciences? It seems political idiocy has taken over far too many areas of what used to be true academic thought.

John Conlin
Littleton, CO

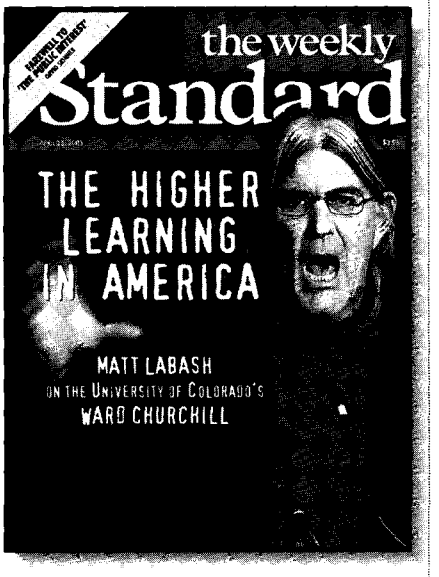
I am a junior at Bowling Green State University and have subscribed to The Weekly Standard for about two years. I enjoy every issue, but I have to say you've really outdone yourselves with Matt Labash's piece on Ward Churchill—I was laughing so hard I cried. Thanks for making my week.

M. Christian Wayne
Bowling Green, OH

Secondhand News

The practice of cobbling together news stories from suspect or unconfirmed sources (Scrapbook, April 25) may be deplorable, but it is certainly not a recent phenomenon.

As exchange students in the former Soviet Union in 1982, my friends and I spent quite a bit of time with some of the American reporters stationed in Moscow. They all shared information as though it were the most natural thing in the world. Reporters who'd met with a source, official or underground, would come back to the compound where they were all staying and casually share the



crux of the interview with whoever was hanging around.

Bylined articles would then be written—and appear in different publications—as though each reporter had personally secured the information, lending a hefty dose of credibility to what was in reality just one rehashed source. (Ever since then, I automatically translate "unnamed source" into "drinking buddy" when I read mainstream papers or watch the news.)

I was also shocked at how willing the media were to report officially disseminated information as true, without even trying to ascertain the information's validity. The day after Brezhnev's death was announced, for example, the *New York Times* ran a front-page story that said all Moscow theaters had been closed the evening before in honor of the chairman's passing. There was no "we've been told," "officials say," or any other such qualifier that might have told the reader the information was unconfirmed.

When I told the *Times* bureau chief that I myself had been at the theater in Moscow that night, he laughed and told me not to tell the reporter (who, he said, had been filing stories slavishly and would not be in the mood to hear about his mistakes).

Whether some or all (or any) theaters closed on that night doesn't make much difference in the grand scheme of things. But it made me wonder what other official information the *Times* had reproduced without question over the years, and what other enemy governments were receiving such kid-glove treatment.

It seems nothing has changed. But today, perhaps for the first time, at least the problem is being discussed.

Frances Erlebacher
Rockville, MD

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Break the Filibuster

Suddenly Democrats are wrapping themselves in the Constitution. Emphasizing his commitment to maintaining the filibuster as a way to stop President Bush's judicial nominees, Senate Democratic whip Richard Durbin said last week, "We believe it's a constitutional issue. . . . It's a matter of having faith in the Constitution." The trouble is, the filibuster is nowhere mentioned, or even implied, in the text of the Constitution.

Suddenly, too, European liberals are discovering the virtues of the Founding Fathers. On the same day that Durbin was confessing his faith in the Constitution, the editors of the *Financial Times* were urging Bill Frist to "cease and desist" his efforts to break the filibuster, imploring him to "reread the wisdom of the Federalist Papers." The trouble is, the filibuster is nowhere mentioned, or even implied, in the Federalist Papers.

What's really going on here, of course, is this: President Bush, having been elected and reelected, and with a Republican Senate majority, wants to appoint federal judges of a generally conservative and constitutionalist disposition. The Democrats very much want to block any change in the character of the federal judiciary—a branch of government they have increasingly come to cherish, as they have lost control of the others. It's a political struggle, not unlike others in American history, with both sides appealing to high principle and historical precedent.

But it happens to be the case that Republicans have the better argument with respect to the filibustering of judicial nominees. The systematic denial of up or down votes on judicial nominees is a new phenomenon. Republicans are right to say that it is the Democrats who have radically departed from customary practice.

More important, perhaps, the customary practice of not filibustering presidential nominees—whether for the judiciary or the executive branch—is not a mere matter of custom. It is rooted in the structure of the Constitution. While the filibuster of judges is not, in a judicially enforceable sense, unconstitutional, it is contrary to the logic of the constitutional separation of powers.

As David A. Crockett of Trinity University in San Antonio has explained, the legislative filibuster makes perfect sense. Article 1 of the Constitution gives each house of Congress the power to determine its own rules. Senate Rule XXII establishes the necessity of 60 votes to close off debate. With this rule, the Senate has chosen to allow 40-plus percent of its members to block legislative action, out of respect for the view that delaying, even preventing, hasty action, or action that has only the support of a narrow majority, can be a good thing. As Crockett puts it, "Congress is the active agent in lawmaking, and if it wants to make that process more difficult, it can." One might add that legislative filibusters can often be overcome by offering the minority compromises—revising the underlying legislation with amendments and the like.

There is no rationale for a filibuster, however, when the Senate is acting under Article 2 in advising and consenting to presidential nominations. As Crockett points out, here the president is "the originator and prime mover. If he wants to make the process more burdensome, perhaps through lengthy interviews or extraordinary background checks, he can." The Senate's role is to accept or reject the president's nominees, just as the president has a responsibility to accept or reject a bill approved by both houses of Congress. There he does not have the option of delay. Nor should Congress have the option of delay in what is fundamentally an executive function of filling the nonelected positions in the federal government. In other words—to quote Crockett once more—"it is inappropriate for the Senate to employ a delaying tactic normally used in internal business—the construction of legislation—in a nonlegislative procedure that originates in a coequal branch of government."

This is why the filibuster has historically not been used on nominations. This is the constitutional logic underlying 200-plus years of American political practice. This is why as recently as 14 years ago the possibility of filibustering Clarence Thomas, for example, was not entertained even by a hostile Democratic Senate that was able to muster 48 votes against him. The American people seem to grasp this logic. In one recent poll, 82 percent said the president's nominees deserve an up or down vote on the Senate floor.

They are right. History and the Constitution are on their side, and on majority leader Bill Frist's side. When the Senate returns from its recess, the majority leader should move to enact a rule change that will break the Democratic filibuster on judicial nominees, confident in doing so that he is acting—the claims of Senator Durbin and the *Financial Times* to the contrary notwithstanding—in accord with historical precedent and constitutional principle.

—*William Kristol*

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Despised and Successful

Tony Blair is about to win another election.

BY GERARD BAKER

London

THERE'S A WEEK TO GO until the British election, and it's a typical day for Tony Blair. During the morning press conference, he is variously accused, by reporters and opponents, of having lied to take his country to war in Iraq, of having covered up advice from senior lawyers that the war was illegal, and of having smothered internal dissent about his foreign policy. After lunch, on the stump in the west of England, he is pressing the flesh of some hesitant-looking voters when one turns away, and with hands clasped firmly to her sides, says, "I will not shake the hand of a killer." Over dinner back in London, he hears news that a veteran Labour MP has left his party to join the left wing and antiwar Liberal Democrats, urging voters to "give Mr. Blair a bloody nose" in the election this Thursday.

Then, just before he crawls into his Downing Street bed, the prime minister receives the latest batch of opinion polls from tomorrow's newspapers. Labour is increasing its lead over the Conservatives—to 10 percentage points in one poll—pointing to another huge, historic parliamentary majority of perhaps more than 100 seats. It is hard to recall an election anywhere in recent memory when a political leader so apparently disliked, despised, and distrusted was so assured of being kept in office with a solid mandate for another term. But this curious state of affairs is only one aspect of the enigma that is Tony Blair and modern British politics.

To Americans who follow these things, the standing of the British prime minister is hard to fathom. American conservatives revere him as the steadfast ally of President George Bush, the solid friend of America who stood firm in the darkest days of the war against terrorism. Bush himself, though diplomatically quiet during the campaign, has not disguised his desire to see Blair continue in office. Yet Democrats, even those who opposed the war, admire the way Blair has done something they have signally failed to do: take the main left-of-center party out of the wilderness and fashion it into the most effective electoral machine in Western politics.

The Democratic party's high priests of electoral strategy have flocked to London in the last few months to offer help to Blair's campaign and, perhaps, to learn a thing or two themselves. Bob Shrum, the eight-time losing presidential campaign adviser, was here this month. Joe Trippi, Howard Dean's campaign manager, has also sipped tea with Blair at Downing Street. "I wasn't really there to offer advice. I admire him enormously," Trippi told me.

How is it that the man lionized by both George Bush and Joe Trippi could be so loathed by the British, with apparently equal energy and, it seems, in an oddly parallel way, by both sides of the political divide? And how is it that, despite the loathing, he still seems assured of victory—and is set to become only the second British prime minister in more than a century to win three straight parliamentary majorities?

Blair's approval ratings are certainly low for an incumbent prime minister seeking reelection. In a MORI poll this month, only a quarter of voters said they like him and his policies. Almost half said they dislike him. On the left, Blair-hatred is palpable. It reaches out from the pages of the left-wing newspapers; it screeches from the halls of academia; it is muttered over beers wherever Labour activists gather. One little illustration will stand for the billions of words that have been spewed onto the prime minister's reputation: In the *Guardian* last week, Richard Gott, a former Stalinist who should know a thing or two about the subject, actually argued that Blair was a war criminal who should be tried and imprisoned.

The evident progress in Iraq since the elections in January has done nothing to drain the poison resulting from the prime minister's support for the United States. When he is asked about Iraq, Blair pointedly doesn't mention President Bush. Socialists will never forgive him for standing up to the French, the Russians, and the United Nations. It is a commonplace, indeed an almost universally accepted truth, that Blair lied about Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction. The prime minister's repeated denials now draw only belly laughs from most of his fellow Labour members. According to Brian Sedgemore, the old leftie who quit last week to join the Liberal Democrats, more than 100 of Labour's 400 MPs detest him. Only a few brave and independent-minded thinkers on the left dare confront this wave of obloquy. For the rest, Blair is a Bush-loving traitor.

But if Blair is a punching bag for his own side, he is a target for howitzer practice for the Conservative opposition. Speaking for a sizeable body of conservative opinion, the *Daily Mail* screams abuse at Blair from its front pages. In the last few weeks alone, the paper has claimed that the prime minister (and his equally despised wife) have, among other things, made the British sicker, poorer, and enslaved to American imperialism. More temperate conservatives despise the prime minister

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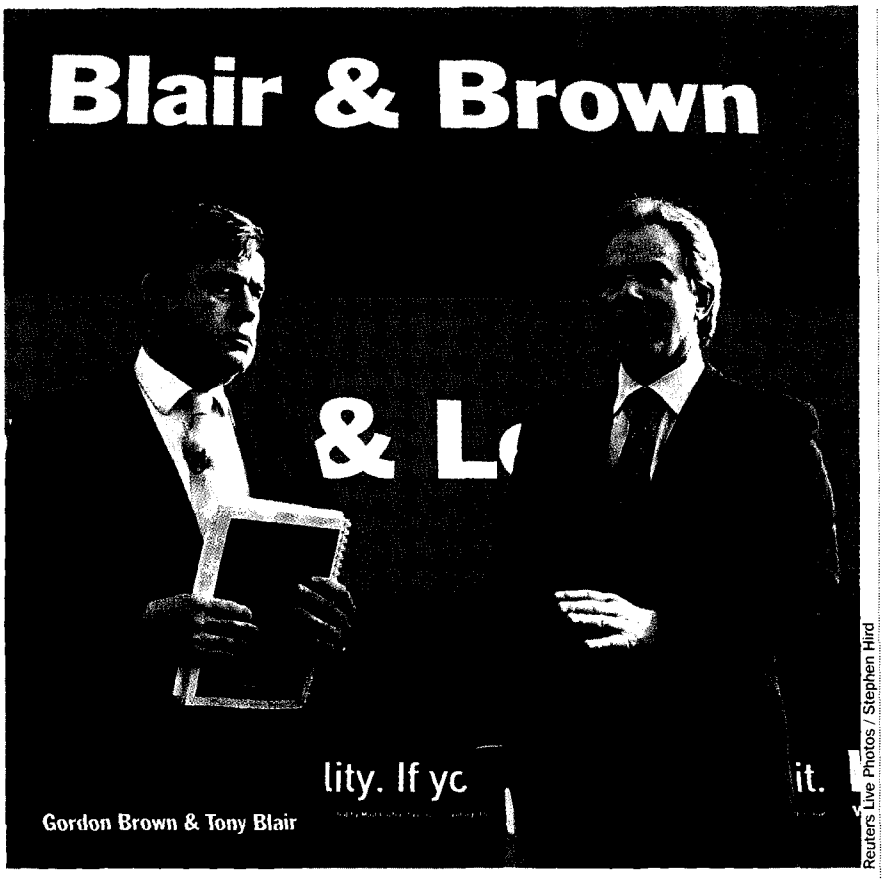

Gordon Brown & Tony Blair

Reuters/Live Photos / Stephen Hird

with a passion that is quite rare these days in cynical British politics. Matthew Parris, my colleague at the *Times*, has opined publicly that Blair is, at best, completely insane; at worst, a dark figure manipulating his own people for nefarious reasons.

It is the liberal metropolitan elite that is most vocal in its hostility to Blair's support for America. But the opposing team also includes a certain type of trendy Conservative. On the right, anti-Americanism is enjoying a revival in English politics, and, allied with a Tory mentality that thinks the world should be left to run its own affairs, this sentiment is understandably hostile to Blair's internationalism. But opposition to, indeed disdain for, Blair on the right runs much deeper than simple opposition to the Iraq war and American foreign policy. Indeed many Conservatives who supported the Iraq war and who have impeccable pro-American credentials cannot stand the prime minister. Since Americans often see Blair as a candidate for sainthood, it is probably worth exploring the reasons he is detested by British conservatives.

Undoubtedly part of the animus Blair arouses on the right owes to his remarkable success, Clinton-style, at repositioning Labour in the middle ground of British politics. Not only has Blair bucked his party and taken a firmly pro-American stance, he has shifted Labour to the center on big domestic issues. Even as he was fighting an uphill battle over Iraq, Blair took on the left of his party over two more small but symbolic issues: the introduction of a more realistic tuition system for Britain's chronically underfunded universities and the extension of private choice into the bloated bureaucracy of the National Health Service.

A Downing Street adviser told me that, if reelected, Blair will push even more aggressively to reform public services and will tackle the welfare spending threatening to undermine Britain's economic success. Such theft of Conservative issues has redefined Labour, but it drives the Tories nuts. Blair's governing style arouses reasonable indignation on the right. Many conservatives object to what they see as an unprepossessing authoritarian streak in his government. The absurd ban on fox-hunting Blair piloted through parliament was a mean, illiberal piece of pandering to the left of his party and a clarion call to the worst class instincts of the British. He has run a troublingly centralized, informal system of government where quiet chats on the prime minister's sofas seem to be the conduit for dramatic changes in the country's direction. Blair has also, despite promises to reform public services, presided over a steady and stealthy expansion of the state through increased taxes. If Labour is reelected, the tax take as a proportion of national income will rise above 40 percent, its highest level in 25 years.

Clearly impatient with patriotic talk, Blair shows no interest in the idea of Britain. Immigration policy looks at times like a free-for-all. He has dismantled half the British constitution and is extremely eager to hand over large chunks of British sovereignty to the European Union. And though his enemies are wrong and unfair when they claim he lied about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, the charge has had such public resonance because there has often been something slightly tangential about Blair's relationship to the arc of political truth. And yet, with fewer friends on either the left or right than when he was first elected eight years ago, he seems certain to win. Why?

Part of the explanation is that, for most voters, even those who profess unhappiness with Blair, Iraq, and even these other political issues have been eclipsed by the economy. Blair is, implausible as it may seem, right when he claims that the British economy has been enjoying its longest period of economic growth since the industrial revolution. Blair also faces a weak and divided opposition. The Conservative party has not yet adapted to the trauma of the loss of its governing majority eight years ago; it has a leader in Michael Howard who is

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failing to persuade the public that it is fit for office.

Labour is further helped by an electoral system that skews the results absurdly in their party's favor. If Labour and the Conservatives finish with the same proportion of the vote this week, Labour is likely to have close to 100 more seats than the Tories. And other factors are at work. Blair's own enemies on the left claim that Labour's impending victory has nothing to do with the prime minister. Labour will win comfortably, they say, because voters know they will be changing prime ministers soon. Blair, in a move unprecedented for a British prime minister, has said publicly that he will not fight another election as leader of the Labour party after this one. Everyone expects him to step down in the second half of his next four-year term to make way for Gordon Brown, his chancellor of the exchequer. Brown's ratings are slightly higher than Blair's; the decision to bring him to the forefront in the campaign was a smart one.

In other words, and perhaps strangely to American observers, if Labour wins, as it is universally expected to, it will be in spite of, not because of, Blair, a bruised and battered prime minister. When he steps down some time in the next few years (no one expects him to be allowed to continue right up to the next election, as he would prefer), he will depart unmourned in Britain, unloved by his own party—despite leading it to once unimaginable success—and despised by his opponents.

There is something tragic about this enforced twilight of Blair's career. He started out in 1997 with a reputation as a slightly slippery figure, a clever, unprincipled, poll-driven political huckster. But the cause of his undoing was a courageous decision to support President Bush against his party, half his government, and the bulk of his people, in a worthy and honorable campaign to rid the world of a dangerous menace and liberate 25 million people. He deserves better than the Pyrrhic victory he will win this week. ♦

Just Saying No

The Democratic mantra.

BY FRED BARNES

DAVID BRODER, the political columnist for the *Washington Post*, wrote last week that President Bush "has become the victim of overreach." Former vice president Al Gore has said Bush and congressional Republicans have a different problem, their "lust for power." Both are wrong. Bush's biggest problem—indeed the striking feature of his second term—is the Democrats' lust for obstruction.

They have answered Bush's plans for Social Security reform, his judicial nominations, and even his choice of John Bolton to become United Nations ambassador with lockstep opposition. "There is still potential for the ice to break," a White House official says. And President Bush tried at his press conference last week to peel off Democrats or at least force party leaders to negotiate on Social Security. He made a strong case for creating personal investment accounts financed by payroll taxes. But Democrats weren't persuaded. The response of Democratic congressional leaders was a reflexive "no."

After the defeat last fall of Tom Daschle, the obstructionist Senate minority leader, Democrats briefly feared blanket opposition to Bush's initiatives might produce a political backlash. That fear is now gone. Rather than feel any pressure to cooperate with the White House, Democratic leaders on Capitol Hill are the ones exerting pressure. They put the squeeze on waverers to hold the line against Bush.

The lone House Democrat to defect on Social Security, Alan Boyd of Florida, has been targeted by Democratic interest groups. The left-wing group MoveOn.org has run ads zinging him. Under pressure from Democratic leaders, a black House member backed away from cosponsoring a Social Security reform bill with a Republican. Last week, minority leader Nancy Pelosi warned five House Democrats not to attend a bipartisan session on Social Security with AARP, the liberal seniors' lobby. Only two, Jim Cooper of Tennessee and Ed Case of Hawaii, ended up going.

Moderate Democrats, however, are beginning to chafe under the pressure. On second-tier bills, many have defected: Seventy-three House Democrats voted to make it more difficult to declare personal bankruptcy. Liberal Democrats then accused them of selling out to special interests, reported Erin Billings in *Roll Call*. Pelosi criticized Democrats who had petitioned House speaker Denny Hastert to bring the bankruptcy bill to the floor for a vote.

The main reason Democrats have overcome their skittishness about obstructionism is money. Their base now includes many wealthy sympathizers and well-heeled interest groups willing to donate lavishly, but only if Democrats take a hard line against the president. Last winter, when Condoleezza Rice's nomination as secretary of state came before the Senate, Rice was attacked by Democratic senator Barbara Boxer of California for allegedly letting her ambition get in the way of her truthfulness. Just reelected, she was bombarded with flowers from appreciative supporters.

The White House suspected after Bush's reelection that Democrats would obstruct on so-called core issues—Social Security, judges, and others like tax reform that haven't

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reached Congress yet. "We had indications last fall that Democrats calculated . . . that there's no upside in working with the president, particularly because of the base," a Bush aide says. Despite losing badly in last year's election, the Democratic base is energized, its morale is high, and its fervor for opposing Bush is undiminished.

The White House and congressional Republicans are belatedly compensating for the intensity of Democratic obstruction. The president's prime time press conference, a rare event, was designed chiefly to sell his Social Security program and show his willingness to consider ideas from Democrats. But the only idea offered by Democrats was that he abandon his plans to reform Social Security altogether.

On the Democrats' filibustering of judicial nominations, Republicans had been losing the argument until Vice President Dick Cheney intervened in late April. He insisted that Democrats, not Republicans, were shattering Senate tradition by routinely using the filibuster to block judges. By barring such filibustering, he argued, Republicans would actually be preserving a Senate precedent. Now Senate Republicans are prepared to try to limit the filibuster—the "nuclear option"—so 41 senators would not be able to stop an up-or-down vote on judges.

This would call the Democrats' bluff. They had vowed to halt the work of the Senate if Republicans succeed in banning judicial filibusters. But they've hastily retreated from that position, figuring they, not Republicans, would be blamed for blocking Senate business.

In the short run, obstructionism works. Bush *has* been stymied on Social Security. The question is whether there will be retribution in the 2006 midterm election. Democrats seem unworried. Sen. Teddy Kennedy claims Democrats still represent "majority opinion" in America. Of course, that's what Daschle thought before he was defeated last year. ♦

Minority Rule?

How the Democrats decide who to filibuster.

BY STEVEN G. CALABRESI

THE LEGAL LEFT is dangerously close to winning the political war it has been fighting against the Bush administration over the future direction of the federal courts. The evidence of this is that whenever rumors are floated of possible Bush Supreme Court nominees, there are some very prominent conservative names that aren't mentioned, though they should be.

The eminently qualified conservatives Democrats have quashed include Miguel Estrada, who is Hispanic, Janice Rogers Brown, who is African American, Bill Pryor, a brilliant young Catholic, and two white women, Priscilla Owen and Carolyn Kuhl. By keeping these five nominees off the federal courts of appeals, Democrats seem to have blocked Bush from considering them for the Supreme Court.

When George W. Bush became president in 2001, the legal left and the Democratic party rallied around the slogan "No more Clarence Thomases." By that they meant that they would not allow any more conservative African Americans, Hispanics, women, or Catholics to be groomed for nomination to the High Court with court of appeals appointments. The Democrats have done such a good job of this that, today, the only names being floated as serious Supreme Court nominees are those of white men.

This is what is at stake in the fight that rages now over whether the filibuster of judges gets abolished. Leading Democratic activists like Bruce Ackerman have called on Senate Democrats never to allow another Antonin Scalia or Clarence Thomas on the Supreme Court. If they succeed in establishing the proposition that it takes 60 instead of 51 votes to get on the Supreme Court, conservatives can forget about ever again appointing a Scalia or a Thomas.

Some Republicans have explored the idea that maybe a compromise is possible with the Democrats whereby Bush's court of appeals nominees are allowed through but the power to filibuster judicial nominees is retained. This would be a bad deal because the fight over the filibuster was always a fight about the future direction of the Supreme Court, and as long as the device is retained, it will be trotted out against any clearly conservative Bush Supreme Court nominee. It is time to drive a stake through the heart of the filibuster of judges.

Senate Democrats also reportedly proposed a "compromise" of their own: Filibusters against Thomas Griffith and William Myers, nominated for the D.C. Circuit and Ninth Circuit respectively, would be dropped if Republicans would withdraw the nominations of Janice Rogers Brown and Priscilla Owen. But this bad deal just shows how afraid Senate Democrats are of Brown and Owen.

Why are Senate Democrats so afraid of conservative judicial nominees who are African Americans, Hispanics, Catholics, and women? Because these Clarence Thomas nominees threaten to split the Democratic base by aligning conservative Republicans with conservative voices in the minority community and appealing to suburban women. The Democrats need Bush to nominate conservatives to the Supreme Court whom they can caricature and vilify, and it is much harder for them to do that if Bush nominates the judicial equivalent of a

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Condi Rice rather than a John Ashcroft.

Conservative African-American, Hispanic, Catholic, and female judicial candidates also drive the left-wing legal groups crazy because they expose those groups as not really speaking for minorities or women. They thus undermine the moral legitimacy of those groups and drive a wedge between the left-wing leadership of those groups and the members they falsely claim to represent.

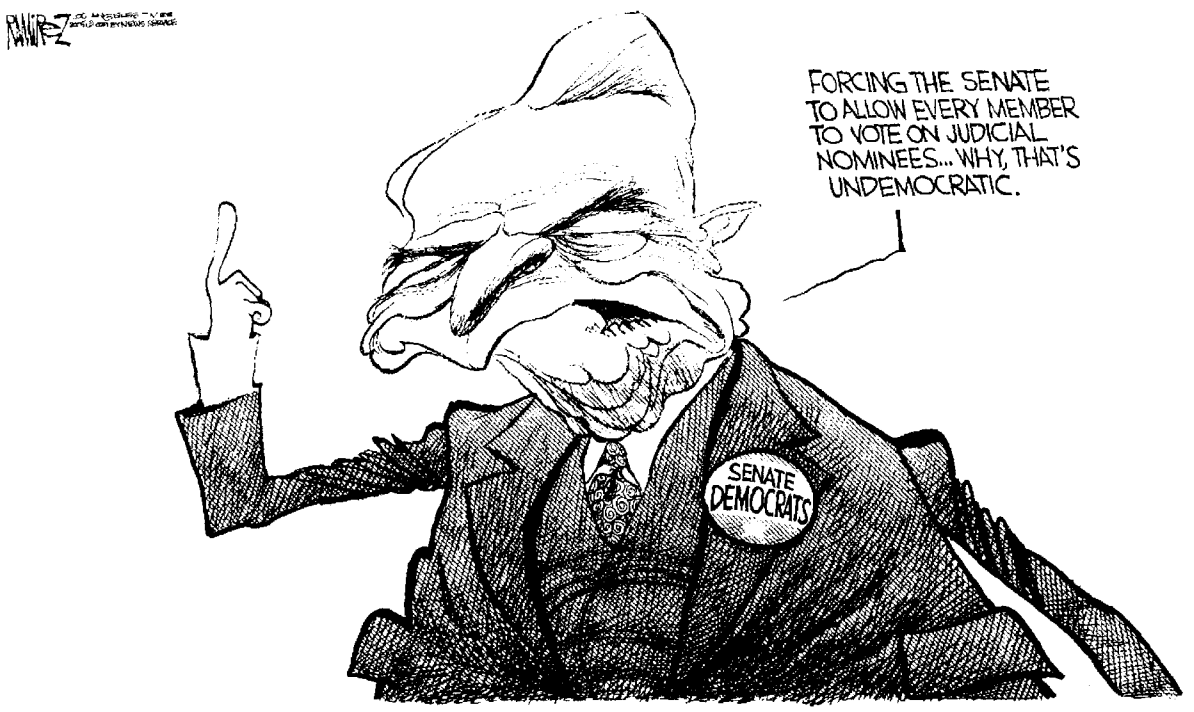
Take Janice Rogers Brown, who won reelection to her state supreme court seat with a stunning 76 percent of the vote in one of the bluest of the blue states, California. Or take Priscilla Owen, who won reelection to the Texas Supreme Court with a staggering 84 percent of the vote in Texas. It is Brown and Owen who represent mainstream opinion in this country—not the Senate Democrats who have been using the filibuster to block their confirmation to the federal bench. If Brown or Owen were nominated to the Supreme Court, the record suggests she would win the ensuing national contest for hearts and minds. Best of all for conservatives, Senate Democrats would be forced by their left-wing interest groups to go down fighting these popular minority and female nominees. At a bare minimum, Republican Senate candidates would acquire a great issue for 2006.

Thus the driving force behind the Democrats' filibuster of conservative minorities and women is political—driven by a desire to protect the party's advantage with minority and women voters and cater to left-wing interest groups. Democrats are also driven in part by their odd belief that "real" African Americans and Hispanics and women cannot be conservative.

The filibuster of judges has crippled the Bush administration's efforts to appoint judges like Scalia and Thomas to the federal courts of appeals. Take the D.C. Circuit—a federal appeals court that all agree is second in importance only to the Supreme Court, and a grooming place for future Supreme Court nominees. In his eight years in office, Ronald Reagan appointed Robert Bork, Antonin Scalia, Kenneth Starr, Laurence Silberman, James Buckley, Stephen Williams, David Sentelle, and Douglas Ginsburg to this all-important court. Five years into his presidency, George W. Bush has appointed only a single judge to that court, John Roberts. The score on the D.C. Circuit is Reagan eight, Bush one—thanks to Senate Democrats and the filibuster.

The story on the D.C. Circuit is being repeated on federal courts of appeals all over the country. As Reagan and Bush-senior judges retire, their spots are being filled by those GOP nominees who are "acceptable" to Senators Charles Schumer and Dick Durbin. It is a safe bet that it is the future Scalias and Thomases who are being kept off the courts, not the future Anthony Kennedys and Sandra Day O'Connors.

It is impossible to exaggerate just how important the upcoming vote on abolishing the filibuster of judges really is. For 214 years of our history, there was not a single filibuster of a judicial nominee who had the support of a majority of the Senate. Before 2003, there was never once a filibuster of a lower court judicial nomination. Today such filibusters have become commonplace, and they will become positively routine if filibuster reform fails to go through. The stakes for conservatives could not be higher. ♦



Michael Ramirez

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Hu, What, Wen, Where, and Why

China's leaders lecture Japan, but neglect their own history. BY JOHN J. TKACIK

MILLIONS OF CHINESE families suffered during the invasion and occupation of the mainland by Imperial Japanese armies in the Second World War. But President Hu Jintao's and Premier Wen Jiabao's family tragedies came at the hands of fellow Chinese, not Japanese—and occurred rather more recently.

Wen Jiabao is the third-ranked member of the Chinese Communist party and as such is probably the third-from-last person in China who should complain about anyone's inability to "face up to history squarely." Of course, this didn't deter him from demanding exactly that of Japan on April 12. "Only a country that respects history, takes responsibility for history, and wins over the trust of peoples in Asia and the world at large can take greater responsibilities in the international community," he declaimed, by way of justifying China's opposition to a permanent Japanese seat at the United Nations Security Council, and by way of excusing the recent anti-Japanese rioting in China.

Indeed, Japan was responsible for mass deaths in China between 1937 and 1945. Western historians say as many as 8 million Chinese civilians died during the period, and perhaps 2.5 million soldiers. Chinese polemicists say 30-35 million died. It was horrific, and Japan paid a price for its aggression. Since its unconditional surrender in 1945, a democratic Japan has become one of the world's most generous aid donors, giving about $35 billion in development assistance to China between 1980 and 2004.

It does not add to the argument to point out that, by all accounts, the Chinese Communist party killed more Chinese during the Anti-Rightist Campaign (1957-59), the Great Leap Forward (1958-62), and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-76) than the Japanese did in World War II. But at least Chinese leaders should admit the real cause of their families' devastation.

Premier Wen's childhood is described in a definitive Chinese-language biography, *China's New Premier: The Rise to Power* by Dr. Yang Zhongmei, written in early 2003. According to this account, when Wen Jiabao was just six years old, he suffered the trauma of seeing his village sacked, his family compound burned to the ground, and his beloved grandfather, Wen Yingshi, shot. This occurred in January 1949, in the middle of the Chinese Communist fourth field army's offensive against the city of Tientsin during China's civil war.

Young Jiabao's home village of Yixingfu was just across a narrow canal that marked the northern border of Tientsin city and its outskirts, on the defensive perimeter of the defending Nationalist Chinese army. Apparently, the Nationalists destroyed Yixingfu and 12 other suburban villages to clear a line of fire against the invading Communists, an act of brutality that the American consulate in Tientsin protested at the time. Premier Wen's home was burned and his grandfather shot by Chinese Nationalists.

Premier Wen has not been shy about recounting his youth to American audiences. During his December 2003 visit to the United States, the premier told an audience at Harvard University, "I spent my childhood mostly in the smoke and fire of war. . . . When Japanese aggressors drove all the people in my place to the Central Plaza, I had to huddle closely against my mother. Later on, my whole family and house were all burned up, and even the primary school that my grandpa built himself all went up in flames."

To an audience in Washington, D.C., he repeated the story. "Even today, I still could remember that. Because even a child had to face the bayonets of fascist aggressors. . . . And my family's and my house was all burned up in the war, and even the school, the modest school that my grandfather built with his own hands, was all destroyed." It certainly sounded like the premier was blaming his family's woes on the Japanese, but he was not even three years old when the Japanese surrendered Tientsin.

The careful syntax of the premier's sentences suggests he may have been uncomfortable with an outright claim that the Japanese burned his family home when this was not the case. Still, this is hardly a model of forthrightness from a man who exhorts others to "face up to history squarely."

Probably Premier Wen's parents did suffer under the Japanese. Certainly they suffered under the Nationalists and the Communists. They spent an obligatory year in the countryside during Mao's "Cultural Revolution" for capitalist sins—both were private school teachers who took money for their services, and Premier Wen's grandfather owned his own school. Premier Wen himself was caught in a fierce factional struggle as a graduate student at the Beijing Geology Institute that became the headquarters for the Red Guard "Earth Faction." In February 1968, he was exiled to the deserts of Gansu province, a thousand miles away in Western China, while his parents labored on a farm.

Wen Jiabao isn't the only man in the Chinese Politburo whose family

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suffered more from Chinese tyranny than Japanese. Chinese President Hu Jintao's parents were "petit bourgeois" tea shop owners in the rural Jiangsu town of Taizhou, and it has been noted without comment that President Hu never returned to his hometown. Last year, reporters for *Asia Times*, a well-regarded Hong Kong Chinese-language website, discovered why (*atimes.com/atimes/China/FH27Ad02.html*).

In 1968, Hu Jintao's father, Hu Jingzhi, was accused of capitalist transgressions, tortured in a public "struggle session," and imprisoned. According to the *Asia Times* story filed from Taizhou last August, Hu Jingzhi "suffered cruel physical punishment" during his imprisonment until "his body withered away." He died a broken man at age 50 in 1978, as the Cultural Revolution was ending. China's future president Hu Jintao was 36 at the time, working as an engineer, coincidentally enough, also in Gansu province like Premier Wen, and also a thousand miles from his hometown.

When he learned of his father's death, Hu Jintao rushed back to Taizhou and pleaded in vain with the local revolutionary committee to rectify his father's case. Hu tried to induce Taizhou "Revolutionary Committee" officials to exonerate his father by hosting a large luncheon banquet that cost him over a month's pay. The officials accepted the invitation, but never showed up. In the end Hu was obliged to let the restaurant staff eat the food. The old chef told *Asia Times*, "Don't think of me as a useless old man. Twenty years ago, Chairman Hu not only invited me to his table, but also toasted with me!" According to *Asia Times*, some "Say the case of Hu's father was not rectified until the late 1980s," while others "claim that his father has never been vindicated."

Of course, if the top leaders of the Chinese Communist party faced up to their own history squarely they would undermine the legitimacy of their totalitarian rule. That's why the rest of us shouldn't let them forget it. ♦

What Syria Left Behind

Hezbollah's future isn't what it used to be.

BY LEE SMITH

Leaving Beirut

EPA / Landov / Nabil Mounzer

Beirut

DAMASCUS WITHDREW its remaining troops from Lebanon last week, ending a 29-year-long occupation and a week's worth of festivities. While senior officers from both countries pinned medals on each others' chests and shared one last warriors' banquet, dozens of Lebanese mothers demonstrated in front of the parliament to know the fate of their sons, many from the Lebanese army, long held in Syrian jails. Hezbollah's general secretary, Hassan Nasrallah, presented the chief of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon, Rustom Ghazaleh, a figure largely responsible for imprisoning those young men, with a farewell gift, a captured Israeli rifle.

That Hezbollah feted Ghazaleh, a man deeply implicated in the murder of former prime minister Rafik Hariri, suggests that of all the nation's political groups, the armed Islamist Shiite militia may have the hardest time adjusting to post-occupation Lebanon. With parliamentary elections anticipated for the end of May, the rest of the country's political order is falling into place. The exiled military chief General Michael Aoun is due to return early in May from 15 years of exile in Paris; the release of Samir Geagea, leader of the Lebanese Forces, after 11 years of imprisonment seems imminent; and after getting what he wanted from Washington, the erstwhile Arab-world neocon Walid Jumblatt is once again promoting the sacred cause of Arabism and warning against foreign, i.e., Western, intervention.

Still, that won't keep Jumblatt from working with Saad Eddine Hariri, second son of the late prime minister and a political novice, who announced he would stand in the elections, then set off on a whirlwind campaign tour of Europe and the United States, meeting with his late father's friend Jacques Chirac and Vice President Dick Cheney. Whatever blessing Paris and Washington may have bestowed on the 37-year-old Hariri, he is conspicu-

Lee Smith is writing a book on Arab culture.

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ously the pet project of Saudi crown prince Abdullah.

"The Saudis essentially invented him," says Michael Young, opinion page editor of Lebanon's English-language *Daily Star*. "It's the Saudis' way of reimposing influence in Lebanon, and protecting their considerable financial interests here. And it's also Riyadh issuing a very strong warning to the Syrians. They're saying, 'You thought you were killing our Sunni, but this is our guy even more than his father was.'"

Cheney's granting an audience to Hariri, a man with no political credentials besides his birth certificate, can be read both as encouragement to the Saudis and as a warning to Hezbollah and Syria. If anything, Riyadh's hostility to Damascus is even greater than Washington's. "Definitely the Saudis would like to have that [Syrian] regime changed," Lebanese analyst Elie Fawaz told me. "They see the Shiites in power in Iraq, and they want that balanced out with the Sunni majority coming to power in Syria, but the U.S. isn't going to do it for them."

Thus, while it might seem that the Syrian withdrawal would leave Hezbollah in an enviable position in Lebanon, the balance of power in the region is shifting against it in subtle ways. Hezbollah is still obsessed with its historic role "resisting" Israel, but that credential may be a wasting asset.

As many Western journalists and researchers have noted, and a recent Zogby poll seems to verify, Hezbollah enjoys wide cross-sectarian support for its role in forcing Israel to withdraw from south Lebanon in 2000. What these same observers typically fail to explain is how dangerous it has been for Lebanon's politicians to withhold praise from the country's only armed political party, never mind criticize it. Hezbollah often claims that it would never turn its weapons against the Lebanese, but that is precisely what it did during the civil war, killing and kidnapping Christians. Since the Israeli retreat five years ago, Hezbollah's popularity has been on the wane, and not just in the Christian communities. Indeed, many here credit Nasrallah's pro-Syrian rally with galvanizing the opposition to Damascus; only after that demonstration were Sunnis angry enough to take to the streets in force alongside Christians and Druze.

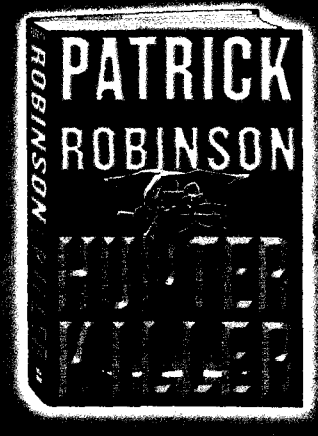
If Shiite adherence to Hezbollah has till now been that community's only way of articulating its support for the political gains won over the last 30 years, the Syrian withdrawal has given rise to new possibilities. The Lebanese Shiite Gathering, a so-called "third way" free of Syrian tutelage, unlike Hezbollah, has emerged under the leadership of Muhammad Hassan al-Amin.

Lebanon's Shiites, says al-Amin, "should not be isolated from the national consensus." That is, Hezbollah does not represent all of the country's Shiites, which is very good news, since many Lebanese have no wish to negotiate their new political system with an armed party. "Nothing suggests to me that people are keen they keep their weapons," says Young. "It looks like the U.N. and the international community expect that the Lebanese parliament elected in May will be made up of people willing to turn to Hezbollah and say we have a problem and we need to resolve it. How [Hezbollah responds] is another question."

Political figures, including Saad Hariri, are quick to praise Hezbollah's past role. But many also recognize that they are faced with a very dangerous transition. President Bush has held out hope that Nasrallah might choose to lay down his arms in favor of joining the political process, but elsewhere across the region Islamist groups that have opted for moderation, like Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, have done so only after they were defeated and then repressed by the states they challenged. Hezbollah may be cornered, but they are also armed, influential, and dangerous. Most Lebanese say that disarming Hezbollah is an internal matter, but none have a persuasive explanation for how it can be accomplished. ♦

From the *New York Times* bestselling author

A Royal Saudi coup. A covert ops take-over.
A mission for the most wanted man in the world.



"*Hunter Killer* reads like the evening news on speed.... The main characters come across as real people caught up in a frightening scenario – one that's perhaps a bit too close to reality to make this novel completely comfortable as escapist fiction."
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A Textbook Case of Junk Science

What our children is learning?

BY PAMELA R. WINNICK

SEVERAL CENTURIES AGO, some "very light-skinned" people were shipwrecked on a tropical island. After "many years under the tropical sun," this light-skinned population became "dark-skinned," says *Biology: The Study of Life*, a high-school textbook published in 1998 by Prentice Hall, an imprint of Pearson Education.

"Downright bizarre," says Nina Jablonski, who holds the Irvine chair of anthropology at the California Academy of Sciences. Jablonski, an expert in the evolution of skin color, says it takes at least 15,000 years for skin color to evolve from black to white or vice versa. That sure is "many years." The suggestion that skin color can change in a few generations has no basis in science.

Pearson Education spokesperson Wendy Spiegel admits the error in describing the evolution of skin color, but says the teacher's manual explains the phenomenon correctly. Just why teachers are given accurate information while students are misled remains unclear.

But then there's lots that's puzzling about the science textbooks used in American classrooms. A sloppy way with facts, a preference for the politically correct over the scientifically sound, and sheer faddism characterize their content. It's as if their authors had decided above all *not* to expose students to the intellectual rigor that is the lifeblood of science.

Pamela R. Winnick is an attorney and journalist based in Pittsburgh. Her book A Jealous God: Science's Crusade Against Religion *is due out later this year.*

Thus, a chapter on climate in a fifth-grade science textbook in the *Discovery Works* series, published by Houghton Mifflin (2000), opens with a Native American explanation for the changing seasons: "Crow moon is the name given to spring because that is when the crows return. April is the month of Sprouting Grass Moon." Students meander through three pages of Algonquin lore before they learn that climate is affected by the rotation and tilt of Earth—not by the return of the crows.

Houghton Mifflin spokesman Collin Earnst says such tales are included in order to "connect science to culture." He might more precisely have said to connect science to certain preferred, non-Western, or primitive cultures. Were a connection drawn to, say, a Bible story, the outcry would be heard around the world.

Affirmative action for women and minorities is similarly pervasive in science textbooks, to absurd effect. Al Roker, the affable black NBC weatherman, is hailed as a great scientist in one book in the *Discovery Works* series. It is common to find Marie Curie given a picture and half a page of text, but her husband, Pierre, who shared a Nobel Prize with her, relegated to the role of supportive spouse. In the same series, Thomas Edison, inventor of the light bulb, is shown next to black scientist Lewis Latimer, who improved the light bulb by adding a carbon filament. Edison's picture is smaller.

Jews have been awarded 22 percent of all Nobel Prizes in science, but readers of Houghton Mifflin's fifth-grade textbooks won't get wind of that. Navajo physicist Fred Begay, however, merits half a page for his study of Navajo medicine. Albert Einstein isn't mentioned. Biologist Clifton Poodry has made no noteworthy scientific discoveries, but he was born on the Tonawanda Seneca Indian reservation, so his picture is shown in Glenco/McGraw-Hill's *Life Science* (2002), a middle-school biology textbook. The head of the Human Genome Project, Francis Collins, and Nobel Laureates James Watson, Maurice H.F. Wilkins, and Francis Crick aren't named.

Addison-Wesley, another imprint of Pearson Education, is so keen on political correctness that it lists a multicultural review board of non-scientists in its *Science Insights: Exploring Matter and Energy*, published in 1994 but still in use. Houghton Mifflin says it overemphasizes minorities and women to "encourage" students from these groups. A spokesman for Pearson Education blames the states for demanding multiculturalism.

If it's the states that impose multiculturalism, however, they're only doing the bidding of the National Academy of Sciences. In 1995, the academy published the *National Science Education Standards*, which, according to academy president Bruce Alberts, "represent the best thinking . . . about what is best for our nation's students." The standards (which explicitly place religion on a par with "myth and superstition") counsel school boards to modify "assessments" for students with "limited English proficiency" by, for example, raising their scores. They tell teachers to be "sensitive" to students who are "economically deprived, female, have disabilities, or [come] from populations underrepresented in the sciences." Teachers should especially encourage "women and girls, students of color and students with disabilities."

This "best thinking" of the nation's scientific elite is being used by nearly all the 50 states as they centralize their science standards. With 22 states now requiring statewide

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adoption of textbooks, big-state textbook markets are the prizes for which publishers compete.

A study commissioned by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation in 2001 found 500 pages of scientific error in 12 middle-school textbooks used by 85 percent of the students in the country. One misstates Newton's first law of motion. Another says humans can't hear elephants. Another confuses "gravity" with "gravitational acceleration." Another shows the equator running through the United States. Individual scientists draft segments of these books, but reviewing the final product is sometimes left to multicultural committees who have no expertise in science.

"Thousands of teachers are saddled with error-filled physical science textbooks," wrote John Hubisz, a physics professor at North Carolina State University at Raleigh and the author of the report. "Political correctness is often more important than scientific accuracy. Middle-school text publishers now employ more people to censor books than they do to check facts."

The aim of President Bill Clinton's *Goals 2000* project, enacted nine years ago, was to make American students first in science literacy. It didn't happen. A study by the National Assessment governing board in 2000 found that only 12 percent of graduating seniors were proficient in science. International surveys continue to show that American high school seniors rank 19th among seniors surveyed in 21 countries.

Members of the scientific elite are occasionally heard blaming religion for the sorry state of science education. But it isn't priests, rabbis, or mullahs who write the textbooks that misrepresent evolution, condescend to disadvantaged groups, misstate key concepts of physics, show the equator running through the United States, and come close to excising white males from the history of science. Young Americans need to learn science, and they need to distinguish it clearly from Algonquin myth. ♦

Trading with Our Enemies

Zimbabwe sucks up to Iran, China, and North Korea. BY **Roger Bate**

As western nations shun the Robert Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe, less scrupulous nations are filling the void. China, North Korea, and Iran are lending financial, military, and commercial support. Two weeks ago, Zimbabwe announced the purchase of six fighter aircraft from China with another six on the way. Enemy number one is Britain, claims Mugabe, and it wants to recolonize his country. He also alleges that George W. Bush is a threat: "We'll put up more of a fight than the Iraqis did." Such crazy talk would be amusing if the dictator's people weren't starving, and if he weren't building strong relations with regimes almost as odious as his own, and certainly more dangerous to us.

There is little doubt that Mugabe needs help. Having used his meager food supplies and hard currency as bribes in last month's stolen election, he has run out of resources. With the United States, the European Union, the Commonwealth nations, the World Bank, and most other agencies not wanting to help, he has established a "Look East" policy.

Talk has turned to whether immediate food needs might be funded by China or Iran. "We don't know where they will get the money from," says one aid worker. "[Iranian president Mohammad] Khatami was in Zimbabwe recently, so we wonder if it's someone like that."

South Africa was buying grain on behalf of Zimbabwe, but has recently stopped this practice. Some 40,000 tons a month are being sent from South Africa to private buyers in the city of Bulawayo. It is possible these are government-to-government sales, though South African traders refuse to deal with the Zimbabwean Grain Marketing Board because of nonpayment problems in the past. One trader tells me to expect an increase in food traffic between South Africa and Zimbabwe over the next few weeks, as more funding, probably from Tehran, buys grain in Johannesburg. If true, one wonders, What the Iranians are getting in return?

Mugabe is turning to less reputable nations because the Southern African Development Community is angry with him over the damage he has caused to regional reputations. Neighboring leaders are quietly applying pressure, such as demanding priority over Zimbabwe in food aid from South Africa. (Late-season droughts and poor management destroyed much of the maize crop in Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique.) Although his neighbors publicly support Mugabe, and endorsed the recent stolen election, none wants to go to Harare to be the first to congratulate him on his victory.

Mozambican president Armando Guebuza, who was elected in November, has deliberately shunned Zimbabwe. "We have so far visited Angola, Botswana, and South Africa. We have deliberately side-stepped Zimbabwe because it is coming out of a controversial election," said a senior aide two weeks ago. "We will visit Zimbabwe and Namibia sometime, not now because we do not want to be seen as the first country to endorse the government there by

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undertaking an official state visit," added the official.

With neighbors like these, it's no wonder Zimbabwe has had to cultivate other relationships. Mugabe has longstanding ties to North Korea, whose military trained Zimbabwe's notorious fifth brigade, which, on behalf of Mugabe, slaughtered 20,000 Ndebele in the 1980s. The North Koreans are short of food themselves, but cash transfers—to support food and military purchases—are possibly ongoing. Another nation Zimbabwe enjoys good relations with is Malaysia, where Mugabe and his wife Grace spend several weeks a year shopping in Kuala Lumpur.

While his people starve, Mugabe has spent $200 million on aircraft to defend himself against a nonexistent enemy. The aircraft are the K-8 advanced jet trainer, a Chinese copy of the British Aerospace Hawk. British prime minister Margaret Thatcher okayed sales of the Hawk to Zimbabwe soon after independence in 1980. But in 2000 spare parts became scarce after Tony Blair slapped an embargo on trade with Zimbabwe to protest human rights abuses. So China has taken up the slack, selling spare parts and now the jets themselves.

So far these eastern governments' interest in Zimbabwe poses little or no threat, but some day they may require a payoff from their nasty African ally. So Washington will have to stay abreast of happenings in Africa's southern heart of darkness. South African political analyst Greg Mills, testifying before the House International Relations Committee last week, thinks the United States should continue to engage the different factions within Mugabe's own party, ZANU-PF. "There are fissures everywhere within the party," he told me, "and the U.S. must maintain dialogue. Regime change is not likely, but change within the regime is possible."

However it comes, change is needed for the starving of Zimbabwe and to prevent the long-term threat of Mugabe's "Look East" policy. ♦

The Islamization of French Schools

A disturbing report is leaked.

BY OLIVIER GUITTA

AN OFFICIAL REPORT dealing with religious expression in French schools has become a must read for anyone interested in the Islamization of France. Written under the auspices of the top national education official, Jean-Pierre Obin, the report was not initially released by the Ministry of Education. But it was leaked on the Internet in March and now can be found in its entirety at *www.proche-orient.info* and other websites.

The 37-page report is the product of a study carried out between October 2003 and May 2004 by a team of 10 inspectors, including Obin. In addition to examining the recent literature on religion and schools in France, they visited 61 academic and vocational high schools in 24 *départements*, chosen not as a cross-section of public schools, but rather as schools typical of those where religious expression has become a problem because of the high concentration of ethnic and religious minorities. Many are located in ethnically segregated neighborhoods now often referred to, the report says, "by analogy with the United States, as 'ghettos.'"

In each school, inspectors interviewed the management team, staff, and teachers, as well as lay people from the community, including parents, social workers, and elected officials. In addition, regional education officials were asked to submit accounts of their experiences in primary schools.

Amid much diversity—some of the schools were rural, some urban; some had fairly homogeneous student populations, others immigrants from many different countries—the inspectors report two consistent findings: a marked increase in religious expression, especially Muslim expression, in schools; and denial on the part of officials at all levels—from the classroom, to the principal's office, to the regional administration—that this phenomenon is occurring.

The researchers began by studying the neighborhoods surrounding the schools. Mostly, these were depressed areas abandoned by anyone with a secure income. The report describes the flight of "French" residents and "European" shops—sometimes after they have been the targets of violence—in tandem with the arrival of immigrants and the collapse of real estate values.

Scores of informants told the Obin team that these neighborhoods were undergoing a "rapid and recent swing" toward Islamization, thanks to the growing influence of religious activists. These young men, intense and highly intellectual in their piety, are sometimes former residents of the neighborhood who have been to prison, where they were converted to Islam. More often, however, they are educated men with degrees from universities in France, North Africa, or the Middle East. They have come to be known as "bearded ones" (distinctive beards are a marker of Muslim purists and extremists—think of bin Laden) or "big brothers" (a name evocative of the worldwide jihadist movement's Muslim Brotherhood),

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and they offer young people a proud identity—Muslim—in place of the dismal identity of the unassimilated immigrant.

The biggest social change entailed by this Islamization, Obin reports, is a deterioration in the position of females. Teenage girls are forbidden to play sports and are constantly watched by an informal religious police made up of young men, sometimes their own younger brothers. Makeup, skirts, and form-fitting dresses are forbidden; dark, loose trousers are the strongly recommended attire. To go to the blackboard in front of a class, some Muslim girls put on long coats. Often, they are forced to wear the headscarf, or hijab, and forbidden to frequent coed movie theaters, community centers, and gyms, or even to go out at all on weekends. Lots of young women were afraid to tell the Obin team what punishments are in store for them if they disobey. Not only female students but also female teachers, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, are frequently subjected to sexist remarks by male teenagers.

In primary schools, the report cites instances of first grade boys' refusing to participate in coed activities and Muslim children's refusing to sing, dance, or draw a face. In one school, restrooms were segregated: some for Muslim students and some for "French." Some lunchrooms were segregated, by section or table. Some students required halal meat; at one school, the principal provided only halal meat for everyone.

With Muslim proselytizing on the rise, the report states that students are under pressure to observe Ramadan, the annual month during which Muslims fast during the day. In some high schools, it is simply impossible for Muslim kids not to join in, whether they like it or not. Obin cites one student who tried to commit suicide because of intimidation and threats from other kids over this issue. Obin also emphasizes that many conversions to Islam are taking place under duress.

Inevitably, the report records rampant "Judeophobia," to use the term in vogue in France. Among even the youngest students, the term "Jew" has become the all-purpose insult. Obin deplores the fact that principals and teachers do not strenuously object to this, treating it simply as part of the youth culture. Even more serious is the increase in assaults on Jews or those presumed to be Jewish. Usually the assailants are Muslim students. Sometimes the victims are, too: One Turkish high-school girl was relentlessly harassed and bullied at school because her country is an ally of Israel. The section of the report on anti-Semitism winds up with this sad conclusion: In France today, Jewish kids are not welcome at every school. Many are forced to switch schools or even conceal their identity to escape anti-Semitism.

According to the report, Muslim students perceive a large gap between the French and themselves. Even though most of the Muslim kids are actually French citizens, they see themselves as Muslims first, and more and more of them hail Osama bin Laden as their hero. In their eyes, he represents a victorious Islam triumphing over the West.

Finally, the report discusses a host of difficulties teachers encounter in dealing with specific subjects in the classroom. Most Muslim kids refuse to participate in sports or swimming, the girls out of modesty, the boys because they do not want to swim in "girls' water" or "non-Muslim water." When it comes to literature, French philosophers such as Voltaire and Rousseau are very often boycotted because of their supposed Islamophobia. Molière, the father of French satiric comedy, is among the writers most often boycotted.

As for history, Muslim students object to its Judeo-Christian bias and blatant falsehood. They loudly protest the Crusades, and commonly deny the Holocaust. Under the circumstances, many teachers censor their own material, often skipping entire topics, like the history of Israel or of Christianity. The report cites one teacher who keeps a Koran on his desk for reference whenever a thorny issue arises. It cites Muslim students who refuse to use the plus sign in mathematics because it looks like a cross. Field trips, especially to churches, cathedrals, and monasteries, are boycotted.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, these pathologies are now present across France. Muslim "ghettos" are found not only in the suburbs of major cities but in towns and villages as well. Obin describes them as islands of counterculture, sealed off and opposed to modern democratic society.

Summing up, Obin explains his disturbing findings as the result primarily of indoctrination orchestrated over years by international Muslim organizations. From an early age, students are taught what to think, what to believe, and to regard their school teachers as liars. The goal of the radical groups seeking to segregate Muslim communities and denouncing integration as oppression, Obin writes, is to take the Muslim residents of France out of the French nation and make them think of themselves as part of the international Muslim community.

In a particularly interesting observation, Obin notes that it is the schools that have reached accommodations with the extremists that are most plagued by violence against girls, Jews, and teachers. Schools that refuse to tolerate the intolerable have coped much better with the problems described in the report. As a result, Obin calls for a policy of no compromise with Islamist demands.

Still unclear is how French educators can be expected to hang tough while their government refuses to own up to the problem—as demonstrated by its failure to make public the Obin report. With the Muslim share of the French population already over 10 percent and growing, the schools are only the tip of the iceberg. ♦

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The Visionary

Tales from the Wolfowitz era

By Stephen F. Hayes

It was only 7:15 A.M. on October 26, 2003, and Paul Wolfowitz was already thinking about Saddam Hussein. The deputy secretary of defense had been awake for just over an hour when he and two civilian Pentagon advisers walked into a large office for a briefing on electricity.

Wolfowitz wasn't happy. The office was in one of Saddam's opulent palaces. Six months after the fall of Baghdad, there were still three-story busts of the former Iraqi leader perched atop the four corners of the massive structure. Virtually all of the images of the deposed dictator throughout Iraq had been defaced or otherwise destroyed in the celebrations that accompanied the toppling of his regime. But not these. Here in the heart of the "Green Zone"—the nerve center of the new American-run occupation, right in the middle of Iraq's capital—a smug, half-smiling Saddam took the measure of the activity below.

"Why haven't we brought those statues down?" Wolfowitz barked before the formal electricity briefing began. His tone was one of exasperation, not anger. It drew a meek response—the kind you give when you know you're about to make a lame excuse—from one of the soldiers.

"Sir, we asked the engineers about bringing them down on the Fourth of July, and they said they thought it would be too dangerous."

"Not this engineer," Wolfowitz shot back. "Get them down."

The meeting itself was unremarkable. That it took place at all, however, was significant. A little more than an hour before the briefing began Wolfowitz had nearly been killed in a rocket attack on the al Rashid Hotel in Baghdad. One of the 17 rockets that had penetrated the reinforced walls of the hotel missed his room by 50 feet but killed Lt. Colonel Charles Buehring, a communications adviser to Iraq administrator Paul Bremer.

Wolfowitz insisted on keeping his schedule that day, adding only a stop at the 28th Combat Support Hospital to visit the wounded. One of the wounded was Elias Nimmer, an Army colonel working on health care financial management issues for the Coalition Provisional Authority. Nimmer had been living in Room 916 of the al Rashid and had rolled from his bed to the floor when the attack began. This quick thinking saved his life. One of the rockets hit his room directly. Nimmer's injuries were serious. He had emergency surgery to remove shrapnel, including several pieces lodged in his spine.

Ten hours after the attack, Wolfowitz walked into Nimmer's hospital room and found a man barely able to move. The soldier was receiving oxygen and his face was flecked with cuts from the attack.

"Where are you from?" Wolfowitz asked. (The conventional "How are you?" was plainly unnecessary.)

"Are you asking where I live or about my accent?" Nimmer replied.

"I hadn't noticed your accent, but why don't you answer both questions."

"I live in Northern Virginia, but I grew up in Beirut," explained the colonel.

"How do you feel about building a new Middle East?"

It was, perhaps, an odd question, coming just 10 hours after both men had narrowly escaped death. Not to Wolfowitz.

For nearly a quarter century he warned about the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. And for more than a decade he has advocated democracy for Iraq and the Middle East.

These ideas are no longer as controversial as they once were. When Wolfowitz, then a mid-level bureaucrat at the Defense Department, authored a paper in 1979 warning that Iraq was "the country most capable of undermining stability" in the Middle East, he did so at a time when the U.S. government was supporting Saddam Hussein. When Wolfowitz began to speak of the possibility of Islamic democracies throughout the region, his views were dismissed as utopian.

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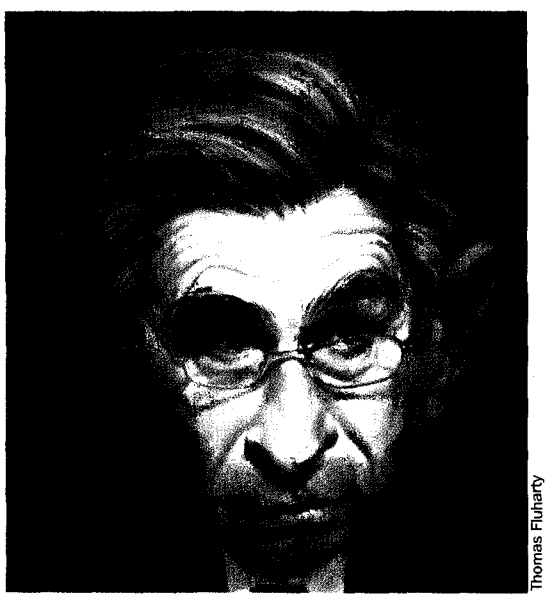
As Wolfowitz prepared to leave the Pentagon last week to become president of the World Bank, Saddam Hussein was in jail awaiting trial, newly elected Iraqi leaders were holding debates in parliament, the Lebanese were hailing the departure of Syrian troops from their country after 29 years, and democratic rumblings could be heard throughout the region. But last week also saw a spike in insurgent violence, news that Abu Musab al Zarqawi had narrowly escaped capture, and the release of the final report of the Iraq Survey Group, reminding us again that many prewar claims about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction program were in error.

Most of the world knows Paul Wolfowitz, if at all, only in caricature. Media reporting about him is overwhelmingly negative. Global conspiracy theories are rampant. Some place him at the center of a neoconservative cabal, the Big Jew conducting a secret Likudnik scheme to maneuver American foreign policy according to the wishes of Ariel Sharon and the Mossad. Others suggest he is a devotee of political philosopher Leo Strauss, and is running the world based on esoteric messages contained in ancient texts. Still others brand him, quite simply, the new American Imperialist.



Thomas Fluharty

The truth is more complicated.

Wolfowitz leaves as one of the most powerful sub-cabinet officials in the history of the United States. In some ways, he has been influential by accident. The views on foreign policy and national security that George W. Bush holds instinctively or because of his faith are, in many cases, the same ones Wolfowitz has come to after decades of study and experience. Bush believes in the possibility of a democratic Middle East because "the human heart desires the same good things, everywhere on Earth." Ask him to explain and you will likely hear about equality in the eyes of God.

Wolfowitz believes the same thing. "The values of freedom and democracy are not just Western values or European values," he has said. "They are Muslim and Asian values as well. Indeed, they are universal values." Ask him to explain and you will get a 30-minute response that includes several real-world examples—from Indonesia to the Philippines to Romania—and that is garnished with references to competing philosophies of human nature.

Wolfowitz's aides eagerly point out that he has been involved in the full range of issues that normally occupy the deputy secretary of defense—from budgets to acquisitions, from information technology to military transformation. But these are not what he will be remembered for. Instead, Wolfowitz will be remembered for Iraq. If, even after the successful elections of January 2005, the fragile Iraqi government fails, Wolfowitz—fairly or unfairly—will get much of the blame. But if Iraq succeeds, and if it continues to provide what Wolfowitz calls a "demonstration effect" for the region, he will rightly be able to claim credit. With the obvious exception of George W. Bush, no American policymaker has as much at stake in the future of Iraq as Paul Wolfowitz.

Much has been written about his policy positions on Iraq. Some if it has been accurate, more of it has not. To understand Wolfowitz it is helpful to observe him on the job, thinking and reacting, at different times through the painful transformation of Iraq from a brutal dictatorship to a fledgling democracy. On two trips to Iraq in 2003—one in July, the second in October—Wolfowitz saw firsthand a relatively stable Iraq with bustling markets and a newborn transitional government, then just three months later a volatile and violent Iraq threatening to descend into chaos.

Wolfowitz grew up in New York City, one block from Columbia University in Morningside Heights. His sister remembers seeing the car of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower (then Columbia's president) drive by as she and her younger brother roller-skated in the neighborhood. Their father, Jacob, taught math at Columbia, and he expected Paul to choose a line of work in either mathematics or the hard sciences. But the younger Wolfowitz found himself spending his free time reading about politics and world history. In 1963 he was on the Mall to hear Martin Luther King Jr. preach "I Have a Dream."

After graduating from Cornell with a degree in mathematics in 1965, Wolfowitz dutifully applied to study biophysical chemistry at MIT. But increasingly he realized that his real interests lay elsewhere, and he decided to pursue a Ph.D. in political science at the University of Chicago. He took two courses (on Montesquieu and Plato) from the famous political philosopher Leo Strauss, but studied mainly under political scientist Albert Wohlstetter, the preeminent nuclear strategist in the United States

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through much of the Cold War. It was a perfect match. Wohlstetter was a mathematical logician who was eager to work with a student of Wolfowitz's background. The association would serve as a springboard for the young man's career.

In 1972, Wolfowitz left Chicago for Washington, where he worked his way up through the foreign policy bureaucracy under both Democrats and Republicans. He served President Ronald Reagan for two years as director of policy planning in the State Department before being named U.S. ambassador to Indonesia. His time in Jakarta would have a lasting impact. Indonesia, the world's fourth largest country and most populous Muslim nation, demonstrated to Wolfowitz the possibility of moderate Islam.

Wolfowitz served as undersecretary of defense for policy—the Pentagon's third-ranking position—during the presidency of George H.W. Bush. He worked closely with then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, particularly on issues related to Iraq and the Middle East. Then, from 1994 to 2001, Wolfowitz served as dean of the prestigious Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

But Wolfowitz kept one foot in the political world during his tenure as an academic, serving as a foreign policy adviser to Bob Dole's 1996 presidential campaign and to George W. Bush's campaign four years later. After Bush was elected, he interviewed Wolfowitz for the top job at the Pentagon, along with former senator Dan Coats. But Bush, who had already named Colin Powell secretary of state, wanted a defense secretary who would have the stature and inclination to counter Powell in interagency debates. Wolfowitz turned down an opportunity to serve as Bush's U.N. ambassador, then accepted the job as Donald Rumsfeld's top deputy.

On September 11, 2001, Wolfowitz was in the Pentagon briefing members of Congress on threats to America. They were notified that a plane had flown into the World Trade Center, but not realizing immediately that the crash was an attack, continued their meeting. When American Airlines Flight 77 hit their building, Wolfowitz initially thought it was an earthquake. He was shortly disabused, and Rumsfeld ordered him out of the building to ensure continuity of government should the attacks continue.

Wolfowitz thought it possible that Saddam Hussein—who he believed might have had a hand in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing—had once again tried to exact revenge on the United States for his embarrassing defeat in the Gulf War in 1991. At a meeting of the Bush war cabinet on September 15, 2001, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz made the case for an expansive war on terror—a campaign that would target not only terrorists and their organizations, but also the states that sponsored them. They talked specifically about taking the war to Iraq.

The question of how to handle Saddam Hussein was the subject of a lengthy debate. Several top Bush advisers, Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld among them, wanted to target Iraq in the first stage of the war. Secretary of State Colin Powell and his top deputy, Richard Armitage, argued forcefully that the focus of our early efforts should be al Qaeda and the Taliban. Both men were disinclined to include Iraq as part of the longer war on terror, or at least wanted to defer any decision to do so until after the initial military response to 9/11 had been completed. That debate broke out into the open two days later.

Wolfowitz had spoken—he says misspoken—of "ending states" that sponsor terror. Powell, asked about the comment, delivered a stern rebuke: "We're after ending terrorism," he said. "And if there are states and regimes, nations, that support terrorism, we hope to persuade them that it is in their interest to stop doing that. But I think ending terrorism is where I would leave it. And let Mr. Wolfowitz speak for himself."

In retrospect, it is clear that Bush sided with Powell and Armitage on the matter of timing. But it is equally obvious that Bush was inclined to wage a far-reaching war on terror. Bush asked Powell and the State Department to persuade state sponsors of terror, notably Pakistan, to stop. But in what is surely the defining element of the war on terror, Bush has demonstrated twice—in Afghanistan and Iraq—that he is open to "ending states" that sponsor terror.

By the early fall of 2002, the Bush administration had started to make its public case for regime change in Iraq. That effort began in earnest with President Bush's address to the U.N. General Assembly on September 12, 2002, and it effectively ended with Colin Powell's presentation to the Security Council on February 5, 2003. Mindful of their audience, both men focused their remarks on Hussein's serial violation of U.N. resolutions. Although Bush and Powell mentioned resolutions regarding human rights and terrorism, most of the U.N. resolutions on Iraq concerned the production and concealment of weapons of mass destruction. Both presentations heavily emphasized Iraq's WMD programs. (Powell spent approximately 85 percent of his presentation on WMD, 10 percent on terrorism, and the remaining 5 percent on human rights.)

In a sense, this focus was natural. The U.N. had been monitoring Iraq's WMD programs on-and-off for over a decade. Hussein had possessed and used the deadly

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weapons. U.N. teams in Iraq had uncovered an elaborate bureaucracy dedicated to keeping Iraq's WMD programs from inspectors. There was widespread agreement in the international community—among policymakers and intelligence professionals—that Hussein had such weapons and wanted more.

The emphasis on WMD programs made sense at home, too. Bush's predecessor, Bill Clinton, had given dozens of tough-minded speeches over the course of his two terms warning about Saddam Hussein and his WMD. Democrats in Congress largely supported Clinton. Many were on record defending Operation Desert Fox, four days of airstrikes on Iraq in late December 1998. The consensus of the U.S. intelligence community, though not unanimous, was that Iraq possessed WMD.

Wolfowitz would have preferred a more balanced public case for war—equal parts WMD, terrorism, and human rights. He made this point shortly after the war in an interview on May 9, 2003, with Sam Tanenhaus of *Vanity Fair*.

> The truth is that for reasons that have a lot to do with the U.S. government bureaucracy we settled on the one issue that everyone could agree on which was weapons of mass destruction as the core reason, but . . . there have always been three fundamental concerns. One is weapons of mass destruction. The second is support for terrorism. The third is the criminal treatment of the Iraqi people. Actually I guess you could say there's a fourth overriding one which is the connection between the first two.
>
> The third one by itself, as I think I said earlier, is a reason to help the Iraqis but it's not a reason to put American kids' lives at risk, certainly not on the scale we did it. That second issue about links to terrorism is the one about which there's the most disagreement within the bureaucracy, even though I think everyone agrees that we killed 100 or so of an al Qaeda group in northern Iraq in this recent go-around, that we've arrested that al Qaeda guy in Baghdad who was connected to this guy Zarqawi whom Powell spoke about in his U.N. presentation.

But the first one, WMD, to finish Wolfowitz's line of thinking, was the issue that engendered the most agreement.

Wolfowitz made his first trip to liberated Iraq on July 17, 2003. The security situation was far from ideal, but attacks on U.S. troops were only sporadic and much of the country outside of the Sunni Triangle was relatively peaceful. When Wolfowitz toured a marketplace in downtown Mosul, he strolled among Iraqis hawking their wares without wearing a flack jacket or helmet. He was greeted enthusiastically by Iraqis, who surrounded him as he made his way from shop to shop. (Several Iraqis, apparently mistaking Wolfowitz for his boss, shouted "Baba Booosh, Baba Booosh!!")

The trip included a visit to a mass grave in Hilla, a series of conferences with local Iraqi civic and political leaders, and numerous military briefings. The daytime temperatures in mid-July often reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit, the blazing sun punishing those who venture out from under protective cover. On an afternoon visit to al Turabah, the now-arid home of the Marsh Arabs who were systematically slaughtered by the former regime, each of the 20 people traveling with Wolfowitz was drenched in sweat within minutes of emerging from the three helicopters that had flown them in from Baghdad.

That same night, Wolfowitz, who'd been up since 5 A.M., returned to Baghdad for a reception and dinner with the newly created Iraqi Governing Council. The dinner was held in the ballroom of the al Rashid Hotel. The original trip plans had Wolfowitz staying at the al Rashid, but security concerns necessitated a change of plans.

Minutes after the reception began, the lights in the spacious room flickered momentarily before going out completely. This was the hotel the world got to know during the first Gulf War, when CNN's Bernard Shaw took cover under a desk in his room overlooking the Iraqi capital and described the shelling he saw on the horizon. This was also the hotel that once housed United Nations weapons inspectors and, really, most of the important visitors to Baghdad for the better part of two decades. Several months into the U.S. occupation of Iraq, the walls of the hotel had still not been swept for bugs—hidden listening devices left behind by a regime as paranoid as it was brutal.

Many on staff at the al Rashid had dual roles—assisting the guests with their luggage one minute and spying on them the next. For some visitors, it was simply Baghdad's top Western-style hotel, a place with a well-stocked bar and employees who spoke English and French. But for others—black market arms dealers, representatives of corrupt Arab governments, French contractors, and possibly al Qaeda leaders—it was Saddam Hussein's guesthouse. Employees had to be ready for anything. An ill-timed mistake could provoke the severest of reprimands, even death.

So it was hardly surprising on July 19, 2003, when the hotel lost power in one of the temporary blackouts plaguing postwar Iraq that a bartender, a waiter, and several other hotel employees tending to the two-dozen dignitaries in the ballroom instantly produced high-beam flashlights. Two generator-powered lights in opposite corners of the ballroom gave off little more than a soft glow, and the guests struggled for a moment with what felt like a visit to the eye doctor. The hotel staff tried to reassure the gathered crowd that the situation would soon improve.

The lights came on minutes later, and would remain on for the rest of the dinner. Conversation resumed.

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Ahmad Chalabi, president of the Iraqi National Congress and *bête noire* of the CIA and State Department, stood sipping his drink and complaining about the slow pace of reconstruction efforts. Saddam Hussein, he worried, remained free because the American military presence in Iraq was confused and unwilling to work with Iraqis tracking the movements of the deposed dictator. Weeks earlier, Chalabi claimed, Hussein had watched from a house across the street in his hometown of Tikrit as American soldiers arrested his personal secretary, Abid Hamid Mahmud al Tikriti. The capture came as a result of a tip provided by one of Chalabi's vigilante agents. Days before that, Chalabi maintained, one of his INC informants had told the Americans that Hussein was holed up in a house in a small town outside of Baghdad. By the time U.S. troops raided the house three days later, Hussein was gone.

Chalabi took note of a large phalanx of guards and advisers entering the ballroom and cut his critique short. The group followed close at hand as Paul Wolfowitz walked over to Chalabi.

"Hi, Ahmad."

"Paul."

"Well," said Wolfowitz, extending his hand. "I guess this is history. We always said we would do this in free Iraq."

The exchange was short and businesslike. Chalabi was sour, despite having been chosen as one of 25 Iraqis to serve on the Governing Council, and one of three Iraqis from the council to represent free Iraq at an upcoming meeting of the U.N. General Assembly. Adnan Pachachi, another exile and one of Chalabi's bitter rivals, had been selected to lead the delegation. Chalabi was threatening to boycott.

Wolfowitz had heard about the threatened boycott. What kind of message would it send to the world about the potential success of the new council if Chalabi, one of the administration's closest allies, by reputation anyway, followed through with such a public display of his frustration? Wolfowitz dispatched one his advisers, deputy undersecretary of defense Bill Luti, to work on Chalabi. Luti is a Gulf War veteran who contributed to many of the Pentagon's important discussions on Iraq. He had known Chalabi for years. And even as those gathered for the dinner greeted Wolfowitz and one another, Luti started in on his old friend near one end of the long banquet table. But Chalabi was stubborn. The two men continued talking as they feasted on the appetizer—three stale dinner rolls accompanied by small portions of hummus and other traditional Middle Eastern fare. Chalabi told Luti that it was not any discontent but a scheduling conflict that would keep him from making the trip to New York.

Luti knew otherwise and pressed the sometimes prickly opposition leader. Wolfowitz was seated at the middle of the 30-foot table, diagonally across from Luti and Chalabi. He appeared to be keeping a close eye on their conversation, which, while cordial, was becoming increasingly blunt.

Wolfowitz, meanwhile, was talking with Akila al Hashimi, a mid-level official in Saddam Hussein's Foreign Ministry and one of three women on the Governing Council. Her appointment had raised some eyebrows both in the United States and in Iraq. For one thing, she was a former member of Saddam Hussein's Baath party. More troubling, though, was the fact that immediately before the war she had publicly defended the old regime and criticized efforts to overthrow it. The "defense of Iraq is now the defense of the civilized world," she'd said on February 21, 2003, addressing diplomats from 114 countries at a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement in Malaysia. "This war is just like a machine, and if it is not stopped with Iraq, the American machine of war will continue rolling over Third World countries."

Wolfowitz had been one of the administration's chief proponents of de-Baathification. That he would be seated next to al Hashimi was either an ironic coincidence or, perhaps, part of a deliberate effort to effect some reconciliation. Whatever the case, the two seemed to get along well, even if much of their conversation was a lesson in avoidance. Al Hashimi spent much of her time discussing a previous trip to New York in June, as an Iraqi "technocrat" lobbying U.N. member states for money to help rebuild Iraq. Wolfowitz listened dutifully.

Al Hashimi's presence on the Governing Council bothered Chalabi. Adding to his displeasure was another uncomfortable fact: Al Hashimi, because of her diplomatic experience and her sex, was the third Iraqi chosen to go to the United Nations.

Wolfowitz asked al Hashimi what she had planned to say in her appearance at the U.N. Then, taking note of the strained conversation between Luti and Chalabi, loudly posed the same question to Chalabi.

"What about you, Ahmad? Have you written a speech yet?"

Chalabi was visibly discomfited, as talk around the long table stopped mid-sentence, and attention focused on him.

"Umm, no. Not yet," he replied, flustered.

"Well, don't you think you had better plan your remarks?" Wolfowitz responded with a laugh, cheerfully pressing the rotund exile.

"I'm not going," Chalabi said flatly.

Wolfowitz affected a momentary look of disbelief before his face dropped with frustration. The rest of the table fell silent. Wolfowitz flashed a quick look of disap-

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pointment in Chalabi's direction before turning back to al Hashimi.

As it turned out, the historic appearance at the U.N. by the delegation from liberated Iraq three days later would garner little media attention. It certainly would have been a big story had Chalabi made good on his threat to boycott. But he had been persuaded, perhaps shamed, into going. More important, however, was the fact that shortly before the Iraqis arrived in New York (and less than two days after Wolfowitz left Iraq), Uday and Qusay Hussein were killed in a bloody gun battle in Mosul. Coverage of the clash and subsequent debate about displaying the dead bodies dominated the news for days.

Two months later, as Wolfowitz prepared for his next trip to Iraq, Akila al Hashimi was assassinated in her Baghdad home.

That next trip came in late October. The objective was straightforward: to determine what the U.S. government might do to hasten the transfer of power from the coalition to the Iraqi people.

"In some ways, the most important subject we want to hear about, principally but not exclusively from the Iraqis, is how we can accelerate Iraqi assumption of responsibility for their own affairs, for their security, for their economy, and for their governance," said a senior Pentagon official traveling with the delegation. "That is really the key to success, and there has been a lot of progress made already."

The Pentagon also hoped that the trip would highlight some of the good work U.S. soldiers were doing around the country—work that went unreported in much of the mainstream press. To a certain extent, that happened. But the enduring story of Wolfowitz's second trip to Iraq was the attack on the al Rashid Hotel.

Wolfowitz was staying in Room 1234, and was showering when he first felt the impact. The security guard responsible for his well-being overnight had just transferred responsibility to a successor and headed downstairs to get some breakfast. Within seconds of the successive blasts, a team of security agents hustled Wolfowitz into a room on the side of the hotel away from the point of attack.

When the shelling stopped, Wolfowitz was escorted through thick smoke down bloody stairs to the chaos of the hotel lobby. Various officials and al Rashid residents were describing what they had witnessed. Those who'd seen the attack were unable to describe what they had heard, while those who hadn't seen anything could remember with remarkable precision the sounds of the missiles firing, the building crumbling, and the rockets exploding.

Wolfowitz was wearing khaki pants, a light blue dress shirt, and the same tan combat boots worn by soldiers. He stood hunched over a man receiving medical attention on a sofa near the hotel bar. The man's face was freckled with cuts. Both of his feet were wrapped in gauze. Doctors hurriedly dabbed his wounds and prepared to send him to the nearby combat hospital.

Wolfowitz turned from the injured man and spoke to a small gathering of his top aides from Washington and high-ranking officials with the Coalition Provisional Authority and the U.S. military. It had been about 30 minutes since the first rocket, and nearly everyone else, including most of the journalists traveling with Wolfowitz, had been evacuated to a convention center across the street. Wolfowitz appeared calm and composed. He sent his flight surgeon to attend to the wounded and dispatched another aide to track casualties and obtain an accurate count of the injured. Moments later, he walked outside to assess the damage to the hotel.

Several small holes had been punched in the building. Many of the green and black curtains from inside had been blown through the windows and were now hanging down the façade, like bedsheets after a prison break. Two of the concrete reinforcements that Saddam Hussein had constructed below each window to protect against attacks had been blown clean off. A Phillips television remote control, split in two, was on the ground near Wolfowitz's feet.

As the group stood at the base of the building surveying the damage, objects continued to fall from the rooms above. An alert member of Wolfowitz's security detail insisted the party move inside.

The third item on Wolfowitz's immediate agenda, following the casualty update and damage assessment, was to write a statement for the media. Kevin Kellems, a top Wolfowitz adviser who specializes in communications strategy, recognized immediately that his boss would have to say something meaningful and in a hurry. Kellems had reminded his boss as they'd descended 12 floors after the attack of the possibility that television cameras would be trained on him all day. It would be important that Wolfowitz project the confidence and defiance of the U.S. administration in the face of such attacks.

At 6:45 A.M., Wolfowitz instructed his staff that they were to keep him on schedule. An early morning meeting with Shiite clerics at the al Rashid would have to be rescheduled. But he wanted to make his 7:00 A.M. appointment with U.S. Army officers working to restore Iraqi electricity and, if possible, his 7:30 A.M. meeting with Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the top British official in Iraq.

Standing at the hotel's front desk, Wolfowitz began writing out his statement in longhand. In the top right corner, he dated it: "Sunday, October 26, 2003."

> This is a terrorist act, but it won't deter us from staying here to do our job, which is to help the Iraqi people free themselves from the kinds of criminals who did this and who

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abused and tortured Iraq for 35 years, and to protect the American people from this kind of terrorism.

As the president has directed, we are taking this fight to the enemy, we are bringing in international support and—most of all—we have steadily growing Iraqis fighting alongside us for a free Iraq. We are getting the job done despite the desperate acts [sic] a dying regime of criminals.

Paul Wolfowitz
Deputy Secretary of Defense

As he was finishing the statement, several soldiers in desert-camouflage fatigues raced by, heading toward the area where medics were treating the wounded. "Clear the hallway! Clear the hallway!" They carried a severely injured soldier to the makeshift emergency room in the hotel lobby.

Wolfowitz and a small group of advisers jumped in four new Chevy Suburbans and sped quickly to coalition headquarters. The lead vehicle pulled into a back entrance to the building, where the driver was told by a young soldier that no one was allowed in through that gate. The driver was furious. As tempers flared, one bulky security officer from another car yelled to the driver of the lead vehicle. "Leave him alone. He's a soldier doing what he's been told." With that, the four-vehicle convoy swung around to the front gate.

Once inside, Wolfowitz and his advisers met for the electricity briefing. He was 15 minutes late. After the short exchange about the busts of Saddam Hussein atop Coalition headquarters, Wolfowitz began grilling the officers about electricity output.

"Why is Bechtel so goddamned slow?" he barked at Brigadier General Steven Hawkins, the man in charge of power generation in postwar Iraq, referring to the giant U.S. contractor working with the military on electricity. Hawkins, who seemed surprised by Wolfowitz's aggressiveness, had no answer. "It is slow," Wolfowitz said. "Keep going."

"If the target is 6,000 megawatts next summer," he queried, "has anyone looked at the real demand? As people get jobs and the economy gets humming, people are going to be using more electricity." Wolfowitz explained that he had become so frustrated by the pace of bringing electricity online that he'd done an Internet search to explore the possibility of renting generators.

"We have run those numbers," Hawkins responded, instructing an aide to present a cardboard chart showing projections of need versus demand. "We think that maybe 7,800 to 10,000 megawatts will be needed to meet the demand. If we get to 6,000 by next summer, that's one in the win column for this country, sir."

The electricity meeting broke up after 30 minutes. Wolfowitz rejoined most of his entourage and Gen. Ricardo Sanchez in an adjacent room. The group was watching Fox News and saw for the first time a wide-shot of the damaged hotel. The chyron at the bottom of the screen reported: "Wolfowitz unhurt."

Wolfowitz had an impromptu meeting with Sanchez about casualties. He was visibly upset upon learning the news, still unconfirmed, that someone had been killed. After Sanchez briefed Wolfowitz about the particulars of the attack, Wolfowitz moved to a computer to type out his statement. The only significant change from the draft he had written by hand an hour earlier came at the beginning, where, moved by the death of Lt. Col. Buehring, he included words about the Americans sacrificing for Iraqi freedom. He finished and quickly combed his tousled hair at a mirror behind the desk where he had been writing. Wolfowitz borrowed a blue-pinstriped suit coat that Bill Luti had been wearing, and the group departed for the main CPA briefing room, across the street from the al Rashid in the convention center.

Wolfowitz read his short statement and took three questions. After the press conference, he was back on his original schedule. A brief but tense helicopter ride took the group to a lunch at the headquarters of the 1st Armored Division—in charge of security in Baghdad. Everyone was eager for an answer to the obvious but as yet unasked question: How could insurgents attack the hotel housing many of the high-ranking American civilians working in Iraq? To say nothing of the fact that the Pentagon's No. 2—the brains behind the war in Iraq—was in the hotel at the time. How could this happen?

The answer would come eventually, but first there was a surprise. The bright blue trailer in which the terrorists had mounted the rockets that had wreaked so much destruction some six hours earlier had been towed to the base and was sitting harmless just 50 feet from the mess tent. It was surprisingly tall—maybe 9 feet high. Some of the metal was mangled, twisted by the force of the explosions that accompanied the launch of the rockets. There were four rows of tubes, each 10 tubes across. A timer powered by a battery had launched the rockets.

Twenty-nine of the 40 tubes were empty—those rockets had fired. Eleven of the rockets never even launched. Of the 29 that left the tubes, 17 hit the al Rashid. And of those 17, only 6 exploded. Six of the 40 rockets did what they were supposed to do.

As Wolfowitz sat down for lunch with the troops, 1st AD's commanding officer, Major General Martin Dempsey, briefed him on the attack in a voice just loud enough for reporters to hear. Dempsey began with a short assessment of the device—"clever but not sophisticated"—and reported that it had probably taken four to six weeks to construct. "I don't think they were targeting

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you," he told Wolfowitz, joking. "So I don't want you to take this personally."

Dempsey, of course, had no way of knowing whether his claim was true. Shortly after the attack, evidence began to emerge that Wolfowitz had indeed been the target. According to news reports at the time and recently confirmed by the Pentagon, an informant working with Iraqi police had provided detailed information about the anti-American elements still working in the al Rashid. At the center of these allegations was a man named Muslel Muhammed Farhan al Dilemi, identified as a caterer closely associated with Saddam Hussein's security forces.

The timing of the attacks could hardly have been worse. In an interview shortly after Baghdad fell, Wolfowitz was asked about the future of the war on terror. He responded that one of the two most important goals was "getting post-Saddam Iraq right." Although he's often reluctant to give a specific time-frame for gauging success, having been burned in the media for doing so in the past, in this instance he was rather precise. "Getting it right may take years, but setting the conditions for getting it right in the next six months. The next six months are going to be very important."

Six months after that interview, many things in postwar Iraq had gone right. But the security environment in the hostile regions of Iraq, including the capital, had gotten considerably worse. Immediately after the war, the U.S. military counted an average of 12 attacks each day on American soldiers. By early November, that number had tripled.

For the five-month period from May through September 2003, a total of 87 U.S. troops had been killed in action—about one fatality every other day. In November alone, 73 soldiers were killed in action—more than two a day. Nongovernmental organizations operating in Iraq had drawn down their staffs. So had the U.N., and some of the most stalwart coalition partners, such as Spain, had begun to withdraw their troops. If the first six months of postwar Iraq were to set the conditions for getting it right, Wolfowitz had reason to worry.

World reaction to the attacks on the al Rashid was swift. "Paul Wolfowitz, who happens to be a Jew and deputy to [Donald] Rumsfeld, paid his second visit to Baghdad this week to report on the situation," wrote Walid Kalaji, a columnist for the Jordanian newspaper the *Star*. Wolfowitz could have pretended that "'all is normal in Iraq,' were it not for the multiple rocket attack that targeted Al Rashid Hotel in Baghdad where he was staying."

The *Hindustan Times* of India wrote that Wolfowitz "learnt on Sunday the dangers inherent in such aggressive policies." A commentator on Iran's state-sponsored radio called the Iraq war "illegitimate," and said Wolfowitz "was nearly burnt in the fire which he started."

But the sharpest comments came from Walid Jumblatt, a leader of parliament in Lebanon and head of that country's Druze community, who complained that Wolfowitz is a "friend of Ariel Sharon" and "one of the main architects of . . . the destruction of Iraq." In a prepared statement, Jumblatt went further: "We hope the firing will be more precise and efficient [next time], so we get rid of this microbe and people like him in Washington who are spreading disorder in Arab lands, Iraq, and Palestine."

Things changed rather quickly. Sixteen months later—following the successful elections in Iraq on January 30, 2005, and the dramatic demonstrations for Lebanese independence three weeks later—Walid Jumblatt gave an interview to *Washington Post* columnist David Ignatius. His words were stunning. "It's strange for me to say it, but this process of change has started because of the American invasion of Iraq," he said. "I was cynical about Iraq. But when I saw the Iraqi people voting three weeks ago, 8 million of them, it was the start of a new Arab world." Jumblatt, the man who once wished Wolfowitz dead, was now celebrating Wolfowitz's war. "The Syrian people, the Egyptian people, all say that something is changing. The Berlin Wall has fallen. We can see it."

Wolfowitz, not surprisingly, has been spending quite a bit of his time in recent months on Lebanon. On March 13, 2005, three days before President Bush announced Wolfowitz as his choice to run the World Bank, Wolfowitz attended a memorial service in Washington honoring Rafik Hariri, the former Lebanese prime minister assassinated in February.

Two days later, Wolfowitz attended a dinner to honor Nasrallah Sfeir, leader of the Maronite Catholic Church in Lebanon, a vocal proponent of Lebanese independence. According to several attendees, Wolfowitz received a standing ovation from the crowd of approximately 600 Lebanese Christians and Muslims upon his entrance, before he was formally introduced.

Wolfowitz lingered after the dinner to greet well-wishers. Among those who stayed to shake his hand was Elias Nimmer, the Lebanese-American soldier who had been severely injured in the al Rashid attack. Nimmer, who has had four surgeries since he saw Wolfowitz in Baghdad, laughs when he recalls their exchange at the 28th Combat Support Hospital.

"Everyone else coming in my room says, 'How are you doing?' or 'What can I get you?' And then he came in and asked me this big, macro question."

How do you feel about building a new Middle East? ♦

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Death and Taxes

There are good arguments for keeping the federal inheritance tax, but 70 percent of Americans—and Congress—disagree.

By Irwin M. Stelzer

Several years ago I suggested in these pages that it would be good conservative policy to raise, rather than lower, inheritance taxes. After all, American conservatives, traditional and neo, believe in a meritocracy in which material success should depend mostly on our own efforts and accomplishments, rather than those of our ancestors.

But Congress disagrees. Or at least the House does. It has voted to eliminate inheritance taxes permanently, and the Senate now has to decide whether to go along. Many Democrats, ever alert to new sources of revenue and to opportunities to strike a blow in the class war, oppose repeal, while most Republicans favor it in the apparent belief that income received from a relative who is departing this world should be treated more kindly by the tax collector than income earned by hard work or entrepreneurial risk-taking.

A rational discussion of the issue is possible only if we jettison some of the misrepresentations and inflammatory jargon in which it has become encrusted.

• Surviving spouses will suffer. No. Inheritance taxes are not levied on spousal transfers—quite right, since we now recognize that the accumulated wealth of husband and wife is due to the efforts of both.

• Inheritance taxes are "death duties" or "vulture taxes." No. They are not levied on people foolish enough to die, but on those lucky enough to be named beneficiaries in a will. The *Wall Street Journal*'s rallying cry, "No taxation without respiration," is catchier than it is accurate.

• Inheritance taxes constitute "double taxation." No. They are one-time taxes on the income of the recipients of inherited assets, not a double tax on those who earned the money in the first place. Besides, as William Gale (Brookings) and Joel Slemrod (University of Michigan) point out in a paper prepared for a National Tax Association symposium, "It turns out that much of the wealth subject to the estate tax has *not* previously been taxed."

• Inheritance taxes force the sale of small businesses or farms. No. Any such entity surely has borrowing power in excess of the amounts required to meet the taxman's demands, and can therefore raise any needed cash. Besides, a study for the National Bureau of Economic Research by Thomas Dunn and Douglas Holtz-Eakin (the latter is now director of the Congressional Budget Office) suggests that an entrepreneur's "propensity to become self-employed" is affected far more by the human capital he or she inherits than by inherited financial assets. So inheritors of businesses, and of that "self-employed propensity," are not likely to sell out and join the ranks of wage earners merely because the value of the enterprise they inherit is taxed.

• Inheritance taxes contribute significantly to the reduction of inequality. No. Princeton economist and former vice chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System Alan Blinder's empirical studies led him to conclude, "Estate taxation is not a very powerful weapon in the egalitarian arsenal. The reformer eyeing the estate tax as a means to reduce inequality had best look elsewhere."

So much for the fear-mongering on both sides of this debate. On to the substantive issues.

The argument in favor of retaining, or even raising, inheritance taxes is rather straightforward. We believe in equality of opportunity. We are, of course, wise enough to know that goal is unattainable, since people are born with different levels and types of intelligence. Nobel laureate economist Gary Becker has pointed out that some benefit more than others from family connections and skill-creating environments, or from "networks of social affiliation" and "parenting skills," as Glenn Loury notes.

But there seems little reason to add to such inherited (via genes or environment) advantages the financial assets created and accumulated by the efforts of others. And, on a more pragmatic level, at a time when the government is badly in need of revenue to meet the president's goal of cutting the budget deficit in half, abolishing receipts from the inheritance tax will increase pressure on Congress to

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find other sources of revenue, sources far more likely to create disincentives to economic growth.

The political lineup on this issue mirrors that of the recent presidential election. Favoring retention of the tax we have the usual Democratic suspects, who have never met a tax they don't like, and assorted billionaires. The billionaires, who can regularly be counted on to support almost any liberal cause, include Warren Buffett, George Soros, and two Rockefellers. Buffett says that repealing the estate tax would be the equivalent of "choosing the 2020 Olympic team by picking the eldest sons of the gold-medal winners in the 2000 Olympics."

Then there are some mere millionaires, men and women who worry about the effects of large windfalls on their children, whom they are eager to protect from "affluenza," or sudden wealth syndrome, the term used by the new army of counselors being retained by investment advisers to ease the minds of their wealthy clients. Upper-bracket Americans are so determined that what British columnist Simon Heffer calls "the habits of industry" not be lost that 99 percent of rich children are made to tidy their rooms, 85 percent to take out the trash, and 77 percent and 81 percent, respectively, to take part-time jobs while in high school or at college, according to a survey of affluent Americans by U.S. Trust. (I wonder about the trash bit.)

Alas, it seems that much of this training in "the habits of industry" cannot overcome the incentive to indolence created by a substantial inheritance.

Alas, it seems that much of this training in "the habits of industry" cannot overcome the incentive to indolence created by a substantial inheritance. Studies done for the Maxwell Center for Demography and Economics of Aging at Syracuse University conclude (with appropriate caveats), "An inheritance received by a family reduces the probability that both spouses will continue to work, and increases the probability that both will retire."

This is supported by other data. A survey by Britain's Economic & Social Research Council found that only 16 percent of "higher professionals," and a tiny minority of administrators (6 percent), routine nonmanual (3 percent), supervisor/technician (4 percent), skilled manual (3 percent), and semi/unskilled manual workers (2 percent) say they work for "enjoyment." The vast majority say they work "to earn money to live," a statement repeated almost verbatim by 70 percent of the men and 50 percent of the women responding to a survey by Michael White of the Policy Studies Institute and Stephen Hill of the London School of Economics. Satisfy that compelling need, and the odds increase that many will drop out of the workforce. Indeed, it is puzzling that conservatives, who fear that welfare benefits reduce the incentive of the poor to work, don't worry that windfall inheritances will have a similar effect on the rich.

Andrew Carnegie, although not endowed with the econometric techniques and survey data that allegedly enrich modern economic research, came to a similar conclusion about the effect of inherited wealth. "The parent who leaves his son enormous wealth," he wrote, "generally deadens the talents and energies of the son and tempts him to lead a less useful and less worthy life than he otherwise would."

Carnegie, of course, was also the most famous philanthropist of his day, and gave away a large portion of his wealth (estimated by British chancellor Gordon Brown at $100 billion in today's dollars) before he passed on to his just reward. Which is the tax-avoidance technique that those who favor permanent repeal of the inheritance tax contend will be used if the inheritance tax is restored: Tax them, and they will give it away before the taxman cometh.

But that is far from certain. Data on the effects of taxes on lifetime giving are difficult to decipher. Wojciech Kopczuk and Joel Slemrod (University of British Columbia and University of Michigan) offer the "tentative" estimate that the estate tax increases charitable bequests by 12 percent, possibly more, but James Poterba (MIT) notes that if somewhat different statistical techniques are used, "the relation between the estate tax and the charitable giving share disappears." We do know that charitable bequests account for only 1.5 percent of the total revenue of charitable groups, and that only one-third of nonprofit organizations report income from legacies or bequests. We know, too, that tax avoidance is not the sole reason for charitable giving, since people of means so modest that they have little need for major tax deductions are generous supporters of their favorite charities. Besides, if the retention of the inheritance tax does induce people to donate to charities in order to avoid that tax, conservatives should be delighted: Rather than turn their hard-earned money over to the government for disposition by politicians, the donors will have decided for themselves how their money should be used. Tax avoidance that allows individuals rather than government to decide who among the needy are worthy is not a result to be scorned.

They might not give it to charities, respond the repeal proponents, but those who have accumulated capital

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might avoid estate taxes by giving their wealth to their children long before they shuffle off this mortal coil—what estate planners call *inter vivos* transfers. Once again, the data suggest that is not the case. Studies by Poterba show that "most households, even those with net worth high enough to virtually ensure that their estate will be taxable, do not make large *inter vivos* transfers. . . . Limited use of *inter vivos* gifts has been a persistent feature of transfer behavior by high net worth individuals." Poterba reasons that "the low-wealth wealthy" fear they will need their resources for health care or other retirement needs. As for the superrich, "There's just a reluctance to give up control of assets—even if the transfer would lead to substantial tax savings. . . . Some households may not be particularly altruistic with respect to their children."

But as with charitable giving, even if *inter vivos* giving is used as a device to avoid inheritance taxes, society is hardly the loser. The transfer of accumulated wealth from the elderly to the young might take the form of spending more on their education, thereby adding to society's stock of human capital.

Or it might reduce the number of golf clubs sold to retirees, and increase the number of electronic gadgets sold to their heirs. As Heffer puts it, failing to enjoy one's money is "the ultimate wasted opportunity. After all, life is not a rehearsal. . . . [By spending] we are saluting the link between our effort and reward." The net effect on GDP and the economic growth rate of an intergenerational shift in spending should be negligible, and the net effect on total satisfaction of a pre-death movement of spending power from old to young is difficult to estimate without making judgments as to the relationship between age and capacity for enjoyment. That would require a combination of non-nostalgic recollection of past triumphs and defeats, and a cold-blooded appraisal of the quality of life at present that is not available to most people. Besides, if good policy requires that transfers to children be prevented, the gift tax can be brought into play.

Equally difficult is any measurement of the effect of a decision to cheat the taxman by retiring early, thereby reducing lifetime earnings in order to minimize the value of assets unconsumed by the time of death. Society would be deprived of the labor of the early retiree, but would receive in exchange the labor of the young forced to work rather than live on the inheritance for which they had been hoping, but of which they would be deprived by their parents' decision.

There is still another reason to retain some form of inheritance tax. None other than Adam Smith was, in the words of the *Economist*, "broadly in favor" of it. In his *The Wealth of Nations*, supposedly the bible of many conservatives, Smith wrote that taxes must meet the criteria of "evident justice and utility." Some tax on wealth inherited by children "who have got families of their own, and are supported by funds separate and independent of their father" would, Smith argued, meet those criteria.

I hasten to add that the economic studies and arguments I have marshaled here should not be determinative of public policy, especially since debates still rage over the usefulness of the many relevant studies that have been and are being done, many of which can be found in *Death and Dollars*, a Brookings Institution compendium. There is a reason 71 percent of respondents to a Pew Research Center Poll said they favor elimination of the inheritance tax, a reason other than Americans' opposition to all taxes, a factor that the American Enterprise Institute's Karlyn Bowman says might artificially inflate the 71 percent figure. Two reasons, in fact.

First, most Americans expect to be rich some day, and they just don't like the idea of the government getting its hands on anything they might have failed to spend or give away during their lifetimes. Good for them.

Second, as a now-departed friend, Woodrow Wyatt (Lord Wyatt at the time of his passing—a peerage earned by service to Margaret Thatcher's government, and neither inherited nor heritable), said to me when I mooted the idea of a 100 percent inheritance tax to fund reductions in growth-stifling marginal tax rates, inheritance taxes "are against human nature." He was, of course, merely stating in shortened and more attention-getting form what Frédéric Bastiat said some 150 years ago:

> No theory, no flights of oratory can succeed in keeping fathers from loving their children. The people who delight in setting up imaginary societies may consider this regrettable, but it is a fact. A father will expend as much effort, perhaps more, for his children's satisfaction as for his own. If, then, a new law contrary to Nature should forbid the bequest of private property, it would not only in itself do violence to the rights of private property, but it would also prevent the creation of new private property by paralyzing a full half of human effort.

If it were the case that economics trumps all other policy considerations, the case for restoring the inheritance tax so as to equalize opportunity would, in my view, be made. Fortunately, economists provide only one of the many inputs looked to by politicians. My guess is that the 71 percent who oppose the tax will count for more than all of the studies I have just cited. Not necessarily a bad thing. But the burden will be on the inheritance-tax repealers to decide which taxes they will raise to make up for the lost revenue—$1 trillion over 10 years. Unless, of course, they favor a still-larger deficit. ♦

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If at First You Don't Succeed . . .

After two decades of failure, Democrats still think Republican "extremism" is a can't-lose proposition.

By Noemie Emery

There they go again, our friends the Democrats, eager to use the social issues as low roads to power, isolating the right as religious fanatics, outside of the mainstream of American life. "We're going to use Terri Schiavo," vowed Howard Dean at a breakfast in Hollywood, pledging to exploit the right-to-die case in Florida in the 2006 elections, the 2008 elections, and perhaps to the end of the century. And there goes the press again, eager to help them, as so many times in the past. The media analysis of the Schiavo case followed a tried and true pattern: The issue was a gold mine for the Democrats, who had on their side all of the normal and rational people. For the Republicans, it was a catastrophe: The chasm between the fanatics and the "civilized" wing of the party would at last collapse the Big Tent.

Most of these assessments were based on a series of polls that showed overwhelming support for the idea that the comatose Terri Schiavo should be taken off the food and water that sustained her; support for her faithful husband in his role as her guardian; and disapproval of Bush and the Congress for stepping in to try to determine the outcome. The problem is, none of these things was quite accurate: Terri Schiavo was not comatose; she was not on life support, as most people understand the term, but a feeding tube; her husband's calculations as guardian were complicated by the new family he had started; Bush and the Congress were not trying to settle her fate, merely opening the way for a federal court hearing. Other than this, the polls were completely reliable, and just the thing for Democrats to be leaning on as they plot their next series of moves.

Here, in four nutshells, are how the polls blew it, and how the Democrats may be blowing it, too:

Noemie Emery is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.

1. All the polls—by *Time* and the ABC and CBS networks—posed their questions as if Terri Schiavo were in a coma and being sustained by machines. For example, the CBS poll correctly described Terri as being only in a "vegetative state," but first led respondents with a series of questions that misleadingly stressed the idea of a comatose, brain-dead patient:

> Question 8: Suppose a patient is in a coma, doctors say brain activity has stopped . . .
> Question 9: Suppose you were in a coma with no brain activity . . .
> Question 10: Suppose a patient is in a coma or vegetative state . . .
> Question 13: Terri Schiavo has been in a persistent vegetative state since 1990 . . .

No wonder huge majorities agreed with removing her "life support." Had Terri Schiavo been in a coma with no brain activity, there would have been no court case, no controversy, and no problem. A coma is a state of deep unconsciousness from which the patient cannot be roused by external stimuli, and in which he knows and feels nothing. A vegetative state on the other hand is one in which the patient is awake, and can move and make noises, though what he may feel or know is uncertain. It is a subjective judgment, on which competent doctors may differ, as many did in this instance, a problem never addressed by these polls. By skirting this difference, the polls extracted the bone of contention that made the case difficult. Does it matter, if you're planning to starve and dehydrate a woman, if she can sense or feel anything? In a word, yes.

2. As Terri Schiavo was not in a coma exactly, neither was she on life support. Her heart was beating, and she breathed on her own. She was not ill, she was not dying, and no "dying process" was being artificially postponed. You could still argue that her quality of life was so low she would not have wanted to live on in this manner; or that the time and money spent to sustain her might be

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better spent elsewhere. But the questions asked in the polls were not phrased in these terms. There is a difference between "pulling the plug" on a comatose patient, who then quickly dies a natural death, and withholding food and water over days or weeks from a person in whom some awareness of pain may be present. It is a difference suppressed by these polls, and in the media's framing of the Schiavo case, although Howard Dean, M.D., should be aware of it.

3. A third little blip was the question of Schiavo's husband and guardian, the man who insisted, against the furious protests of her parents and siblings, that she be put to death. From the polls, one might assume he was a model of spousal devotion. In reality, Michael Schiavo was in a bitter-end feud with Terri's birth family; there were violent rows over large sums of money; he had a common-law wife and two children by her. Few people could fairly dispute the right of a young man to want more in his life than a bedside vigil that might go on forever, but why did he not surrender his guardianship to her parents, who were eager to take it? The more one knew about Michael's conflicts of interest, the less intrusive the actions of Congress and the Bush brothers looked. Given the choice of a guardian between a (fairly) objective government representative and a creepy and greedy bigamous husband, most people wouldn't have to think twice.

Republicans should learn from this to tread lightly, to explain themselves better, and to be aware of public suspicion of government meddling.

4. And speaking of the government, a fourth kind of misrepresentation took place in the media's framing of public opinion. One might assume that Bill Frist, Tom DeLay, and the Bush brothers intended to stand vigil at Terri Schiavo's bedside and give orders to her caretakers. This wasn't quite accurate. They intervened so the case would be reconsidered in the federal courts, something routinely done, for example, often in capital cases before an execution (the only cases in which liberals can fairly be described as being "pro-life"). Pollster Pat Caddell, reacting to the skewing of the Schiavo surveys, said, "It could be just pure incompetence; however, I suspect that there's more here than that."

Just how skewed were the polls? Days later, John Zogby completed a poll for the Christian Defense Coalition that, by framing the case differently, produced radically different results. As he wrote later, "eight-in-ten likely voters say that a disabled person who is not terminally ill or in a coma, and not being kept alive by life support should not, in the absence of a written directive . . . be denied food and water." Aside from the fact that Terri Schiavo was described as disabled, but not in a coma, the main difference in the Zogby poll seems to have been that the feeding tube was referred to as "food and water," not "life support." ("If a disabled person is not terminally ill, not in a coma, and not being kept alive on life support, and they have no written directive, should or should they not be denied food and water?") The issue of approval of federal intervention in this special case rose to an even split from a 13-82 deficit: When asked if "it is proper for the federal government to intervene when disabled people are denied food and water by a state court judge's order," respondents were deadlocked, with 44 percent favoring such intervention, and 43 percent opposed.

It is true that the Zogby poll did not stress the extreme disability suffered by Schiavo, but neither did it have the distortions and errors one finds in the others, and the difference in outcomes contingent on the wording of the questions shows the ambivalence and conflict under the surface that the well-publicized mainstream media polls obscured. Republicans should learn from this to tread lightly, to explain themselves better, and to be aware of public suspicion of government meddling. But Democrats should be alert to cracks under the surface, realize that what looks too good to be true sometimes is, and recall that they've been fooled before.

Before Dean and his friends try too hard to press their advantage, they might remember what happened the last time they had a hot social issue they thought would be golden, and a media only too eager to help. The time was 20 years ago, the cause was abortion, and both parties were in the same place: Each had a party platform that was off on the edges of public opinion, and an energized base with a fanatical element that often put swing voters off. The problem for the Democrats was that only one party knew it: While Republicans were hammered relentlessly by the press for their lunatic fringes, told how extreme they were, how eccentric they were, and how insane they appeared to rational people, Democrats were told and told often that their lunatic fringe was one of their most attractive features. Nothing was wrong with them or with their message, which was wholly in tune with enlightened opinion. To the media, the issue was referred to as "choice," abortion lobbies were referred to as "speaking for women," and the issue itself was por-

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trayed as one giant wedge, driving off sensible GOP soccer moms, unable to stomach their party's takeover by right-to-life right-wing fanatics.

Left unsaid by the press, until many years later, was the fact that the "choice" talk was unnerving millions, that the abortion advocates could themselves be fanatics, and that for every well-publicized Republican turned off or away by seeing her party intrude into "personal" matters, there was a rather less publicized Democrat or two, unnerved at seeing his party, which claimed to speak for the weak and the helpless, refer to the destruction of the human fetus as a matter of privacy rights. In fact, the issue was a problem for both major parties, causing both to lose (and gain) voters, but you would never have known this from media coverage, which focused exclusively on the Republican party, the harm done to it by its fanatical elements, and the troubles endured by brave and embattled pro-choice Republicans, who fought vainly to hold back the tide.

Left unsaid by the press, until many years later, was the fact that the Democrats' "choice" talk was unnerving millions.

Through the 1980s and '90s, the American people were assured repeatedly that the country was solidly pro-choice and just as put off by conservative moralists as was . . . well, as was the press itself. The press played up elections where the pro-choice side won, as in Virginia's 1989 gubernatorial race, when the moderately pro-choice Douglas Wilder beat the extremely pro-life Marshall Coleman, and downplayed the issue when the opposite happened, as in 1997, when Virginia's moderately pro-life James Gilmore beat the very pro-choice Don Beyer. Egged on by the reporting of the *Washington Post*, Beyer jumped on Gilmore's support for a parental notification law for teen abortions, accusing him of waging a war against women in a series of attacks and ads. (Turned out most pro-choice voters supported such notification.) There would be many elections in which Democrats would be left wondering why their prize issue didn't pay off, and then came the shock of the 2004 election and the forced recognition that their progressive message had driven a wedge between themselves and many American voters. "The Democratic defense of abortion makes me cringe," Sarah Blustain wrote in the *American Prospect*. "It rubs me the wrong way—and I'm one of those classic 30-something, northeastern, educated, *pro-choice* women who believes the message. . . . Even as I support Democratic candidates . . . I'm turned off by their abortion rhetoric." Actually, many people had been turned off for some time before this, but the party was slow to catch on. Why didn't the Democrats know they were headed for trouble? The press didn't tell them. And it may not be telling them now.

This isn't to say either side in these cases has a firm grip on public opinion, but to say that on controversial life and death issues public opinion is elusive, conflicted, and quite hard to pin down. The prevalent view is a state of ambivalence. It is possible, as most Americans do, to view abortion as a form of killing they will reluctantly agree not to outlaw in certain conditions, or to feel one would not want to live on in Terri Schiavo's condition, yet cringe at the thought of court-ordered dehydration and starvation. Sometimes the abortion divide crosses over quite neatly into end-of-life issues; sometimes it does not. Someone who opposes abortion as taking the life of another innocent party might not have a problem if an uncoerced adult with a terminal illness decides to cut short his own suffering. On the other side, pro-choice stalwarts such as Barney Frank and Tom Harkin were cross-pressured by their work on behalf of disabled people, of whom Terri Schiavo was one.

Attitudes such as these make gauging opinion terribly dicey, and potentially lethal for those who misread it. "In June [2004], Gallup found that depending on the polls one looked at, Americans can be considered either 54 percent to 43 percent more positive than negative toward abortion, or 61 percent to 37 percent more negative," Blustain wrote after the election last fall. "The differences," she quoted Gallup, "appear to be related to question wording, suggesting that some people are so conflicted on the issue of abortion that even slight wording differences can move them from a positive to a negative view."

Exactly. Change the framing from "exercising a choice" to "killing a baby," and the results are quite different; as they are when "pulling the plug on a comatose patient" becomes "starving a disabled woman to death." It's a good rule of thumb in American politics that if an issue breaks 80-20 for your party, probably something has been misunderstood. If Howard Dean wasn't just mouthing off to a credulous roomful of supporters, Democrats may be mistaking the views of their fringes for mainstream public opinion, lured along by the press's indulgence of their illusions. A few years from now, they may wake up and find that their progressive and "popular" stances have built a wall between themselves and large numbers of voters. Again. ♦

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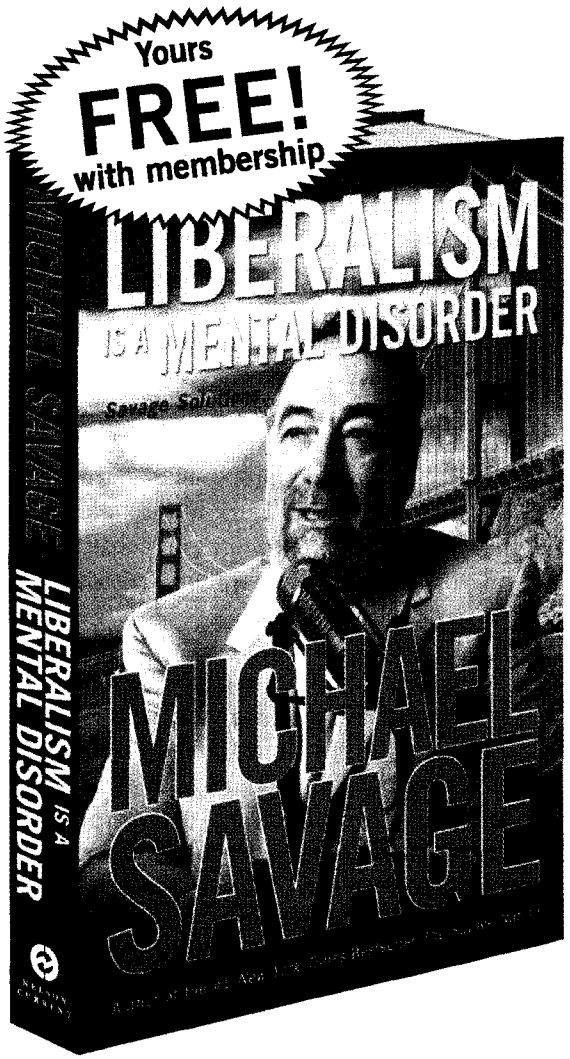
Michael Savage diagnoses "the mental disorder of liberalism" — and offers a comprehensive cure-all



With grit, guts, and gusto, Michael Savage has made his talk show ***The Savage Nation*** a must-hear by fearlessly telling it like it is. Night after night, Savage savages today's rabid liberalism with verve and precision, speaking truths that other public figures are too politically correct or afraid to say. In his new book, ***Liberalism Is a Mental Disorder***, he lays it on the line: "You will not have a nation," he says, "unless you awaken to the reality that America has become pacified; America has become feminized; and America is being compromised from without and within. You cannot let them get away with this. Can America be saved? Is it too late? I believe that with God's will and with your determination to confront the mental disorder of liberalism whenever and wherever it is found, America can both survive and thrive." In this book, he shows how.

In this third installment of his bold, biting, and bestselling trilogy, Savage offers provocative and practical ways to reclaim our social, political, and cultural integrity. Through a compelling narrative of current trends and events, Savage chronicles the continued assault on the sacred pillars of American life (the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Ten Commandments, the Sanctity of Marriage) by the High Priests of Ultra-Liberalism. In each chapter, the Savage Spotlight of Truth casts its brilliant light on the tactics used by liberals to spread their leftist agenda. Savage follows his analysis with specific actions, arguments, and recommendations for action that the reader can ingest to counter the radical left.

Savage has long insisted that America's best days are in front of her — if only we have the guts to face the truth and apply ourselves to repairing the foundation upon which this blessed nation was formed. The doctor is in and the diagnosis is clear: in ***Liberalism Is a Mental Disorder***, Michael Savage provides a remedy to help freedom-loving Americans effectively medicate the mental disease of modern liberalism and restore America's former brilliance.

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Civilization and Its Malcontents

Or, why are academics so unhappy? By Joseph Epstein

I had a friend, now long dead, named Walter B. Scott, a professor at Northwestern University whose specialty was theatrical literature, who never referred to university teaching as other than a—or sometimes *the*—"racket." What Walter, a notably unambitious man, meant was that it was an unconscionably easy way to make a living, a soft touch, as they used to say. Working under conditions of complete freedom, having to show up in the classroom an impressively small number of hours each week, with the remainder of one's time chiefly left to cultivate one's own intellectual garden, at a job from which one could never be fired and which (if one adds up the capacious vacation time) amounted to fewer than six months work a year for pay that is very far from miserable—yes, I'd say "a racket" just about gets it.

And yet, as someone who came late to university teaching, I used to wonder why so many people in the racket were so obviously disappointed, depressed, and generally demoralized. Granted, until one achieves that Valhalla for scholars known as tenure—which really means lifetime security, obtainable on no other job that I know—an element of tension is entailed, but then so is it in every other job. As a young instructor, one is often assigned dogsbody work, teaching what is thought to be dull fare: surveys, composition courses, and the rest. But the unhappier academics, in my experience, are not those still struggling to gain a seat at the table, but those who have already grown dour from having been there for a long while.

So far as I know, no one has ever done a study of the unhappiness of academics. Who might be assigned to the job? Business-school professors specializing in industrial psychology and employer/employee relations would botch it. Disaffected sociologists would blame it all on society and knock off for the rest of the semester. My own preference would be anthropologists, using methods long ago devised for investigating a culture from the outside in. The closest thing we have to these ideal anthropologists have been novelists writing academic novels, and their lucubrations, while not as precise as one would like on the reasons for the unhappiness of academics, do show

Faculty Towers
The Academic Novel and Its Discontents
by Elaine Showalter
University of Pennsylvania Press, 143 pp., $24.95

Joseph Epstein is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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Elaine Showalter

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a strong and continuing propensity on the part of academics intrepidly to make the worst of what ought to be a perfectly delightful situation.

Faculty Towers is a report on the findings of those novelists who have worked the genre long known as the academic novel. The book is written by an insider, for Professor Elaine Showalter, now in her middle sixties, is, as they used to say on the carnival grounds, "with the show." At various places in her slight book, she inserts her own experience as a graduate student and professor, though not to very interesting effect. An early entry in the feminist sweepstakes, she is currently the Avalon Foundation Professor of the Humanities at Princeton, a past president of the Modern Language Association, a founder of "gynocriticism" (or the study of women writers)—in other words, guilty until proven innocent. She has also been described—readers retaining a strong sense of decorum are advised to skip the remainder of this paragraph—as "Camille Paglia with balls," a description meant approbatively, or so at least Princeton must feel, for they print it on *princetoninfo.com*, a stark indication of the tone currently reigning in American universities.

Professor Showalter's book is chiefly a chronological account of Anglophone academic novels for the past sixty or so years, beginning with C.P. Snow's *The Masters* (1951) and running through examples of the genre produced in the 21st century. *Faculty Towers* is, for the most part, given over to plot summaries of these novels, usually accompanied by judgments about their quality, with extra bits of feminism (mild scorn is applied where the plight of women in academic life is ignored) thrown in at no extra charge.

The book's title, playing off the John Cleese comedy *Fawlty Towers*, suggests the book's larger theme: that the university, as reflected in the academic novels Showalter examines, has increasingly become rather like a badly run hotel, with plenty of nuttiness to go round. The difficulty here is that Showalter believes that things are not all that nutty. *Mirabile dictu*: She finds them looking up. "The university," she writes, "is no longer a sanctuary or a refuge; it is fully caught up in the churning community and the changing society; but it is a fragile institution rather than a fortress."

The feminism in *Faculty Towers* is generally no more than a tic, which the book's author by now probably cannot really control, and after a while one gets used to it, without missing it when it fails to show up. The only place Showalter's feminism seriously gets in the way, in my view, is in her judgments of Mary McCarthy's *The Groves of Academe* (a forgettable—and now quite properly forgotten—novel that she rates too highly) and Randall Jarrell's wickedly amusing *Pictures from an Institution* (which she attempts, intemperately, to squash). The two misjudgments happen to be nicely connected: the most menacing character in Jarrell's novel, Gertrude Johnson, is based on Mary McCarthy, who may well be one of Showalter's personal heroines, of whom Jarrell has one of his characters remark: "She may be a mediocre novelist but you've got to admit that she's a wonderful liar." Sounds right to me.

Being with the show has doubtless clouded Showalter's judgment of *Pictures from an Institution*, which contains, among several withering criticisms of university life, a marvelously prophetic description of the kind of perfectly characterless man who will eventually —that is to say, now, in our day—rise to the presidencies of universities all over the country. Cozening, smarmy, confidently boring, an appeaser of all and offender of none, "idiot savants of success" (Jarrell's perfect phrase), not really quite human but, like President Dwight Robbins of the novel's Benton College, men (and some women) with a gift for "seeming human"—in short, the kind of person the faculty of Harvard is currently hoping to turn the detoxed Lawrence Summers into if they can't succeed in firing him straightaway for his basic mistake in thinking that they actually believe in free speech.

C.P. Snow's *The Masters*, is a novel about the intramural political alignments involved in finding the right man to replace the dying master of a Cambridge college. In this novel, the worthiness of the university and the significance of the scholars and scientists contending for the job are not questioned; the conflict is between contending but serious points of view: scientific and humanistic, the school of cool progress versus that of warm tradition. In 1951, the university still seemed an altogether admirable place, professors serious and significant. Or so it seemed in the 1950s to those of us for whom going to college was not yet an automatic but still felt to be a privileged choice.

One might think that the late 1960s blew such notions completely out of the water. It did, but not before Kingsley Amis, in *Lucky Jim* (1954), which Showalter rightly calls "the funniest academic satire of the century," first loosed the torpedoes. In *Lucky Jim*, the setting is a provincial English university and the dominant spirit is one of pomposity, nicely reinforced by cheapshot one-upmanship and intellectual fraudulence. Jim Dixon, the novel's eponymous hero, striving to become a regular member of the history faculty, is at work on an article titled "The Economic Influence of Developments in Shipbuilding Techniques, 1450 to 1485," a perfect example of fake scholarship in which, as he recognizes, "pseudo light" is cast upon "false problems." Amis puts Dixon through every hell of

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social embarrassment and comic awkwardness, but the reason Jim is lucky, one might tend to forget in all the laughter, is that in the end he escapes the university and thus a life of intellectual fraudulence and spiritual aridity.

Amis's hero is a medieval historian, but the preponderance of academic novels are set in English departments. The reason for this can be found in universities choosing to ignore a remark made by the linguist Roman Jakobson, who, when it was proposed to the Harvard faculty to hire Vladimir Nabokov, said that the zoology department does not hire an elephant, one of the objects of its study, so why should an English department hire a contemporary writer, also best left as an object of study? Jakobson is usually mocked for having made that remark, but he was probably correct: better to study writers than hire them. To hire a novelist for a university teaching job is turning the fox loose in the hen house. The result—no surprise here—has been feathers everywhere.

Showalter makes only brief mention of one of my favorite academic novels, *The Mind-Body Problem* by Rebecca Goldstein. Ms. Goldstein is quoted on the interesting point that at Princeton Jews become gentilized while at Columbia Gentiles become judenized, which is not only amusing but true. Goldstein's novel is also brilliant on the snobbery of university life. She makes the nice point that the poorest dressers in academic life (there are no good ones) are the mathematicians, followed hard upon by the physicists. The reason they care so little about clothes—also about wine and the accoutrements of culture—is that, Goldstein rightly notes, they feel that in their work they are dealing with the higher truths, and need not be bothered with such *kakapitze* as cooking young vegetables, decanting wine correctly, and knowing where to stay in Paris.

Where the accoutrements of culture count for most are in the humanities departments, where truth, as the physical scientists understand it, simply isn't part of the deal. "What do you guys in the English Department do," a scientist at Northwestern once asked me, quite in earnest, "just keep reading Shakespeare over and over, like Talmud?"

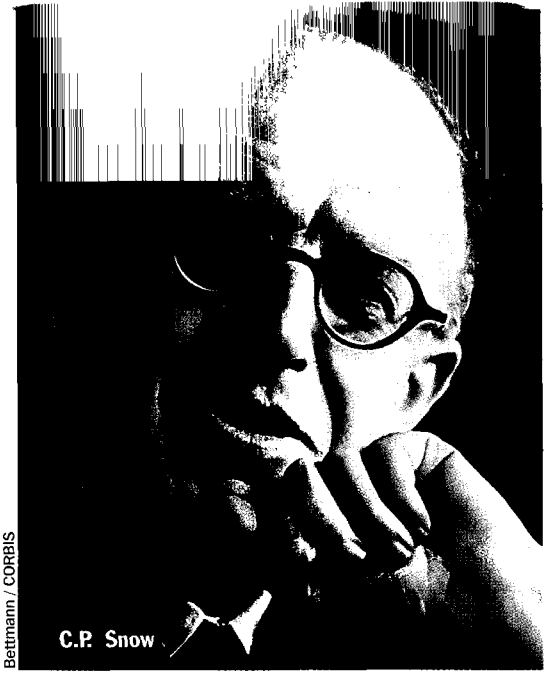
"Nothing that grand," I found myself replying.

Professor Showalter does not go in much for discussing the sex that is at the center of so many academic novels. Which reminds me that the first time I met Edward Shils, he asked me what I was reading. When I said *The War Between the Tates* by Alison Lurie, he replied, "Academic screwing, I presume." He presumed rightly. How could it be otherwise with academic novels? Apart from the rather pathetic power struggles over department chairmanships, or professorial appointments, love affairs, usually adulterous or officially outlawed ones, provide the only thing resembling drama on offer on the contemporary university campus.

Early academic novels confined love affairs to adults on both sides. But by the 1970s, after the "student unrest" (still my favorite of all political euphemisms) of the late 1960s, students—first graduate students, then undergraduates—became the lovers of (often married) professors. If men were writing these novels, the experience was supposed to result in spiritual refreshment; if women wrote them, the male professors were merely damned fools. The women novelists, of course, were correct.

The drama of love needs an element of impossibility: think *Romeo and Juliet*, think *Anna Karenina*, think *Lolita*. But in the academic novel, this element seems to have disappeared, especially in regard to the professor-student love affair, where the (usually female) student could no longer be considered very (if at all) innocent. The drama needed to derive elsewhere. That elsewhere hasn't yet been found, unless one counts sexual harassment suits, which are not yet the subject of an academic novel but have been that of *Oleanna*, a play by David Mamet, who is not an academic but grasped the dramatic element in such dreary proceedings.

Sexual harassment, of course, touches on political correctness, which is itself the product of affirmative action,


Bettmann / CORBIS

C.P. Snow

usually traveling under the code name of diversity. Many people outside universities may think that diversity has been imposed on universities from without by ignorant administrators. But professors themselves rather like it; it makes them feel they are doing the right thing and, hence, allows them, however briefly, to feel good about themselves.

Nor is diversity the special preserve of prestige-laden or large state-run universities. In the 1970s, I was invited to give a talk at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. I arrived to find all the pieces in place: On the English faculty was a black woman (very nice, by the way), an appropriately snarky feminist, a gay (not teaching the thing called Queer Theory, which hadn't yet been devised), a Jew, and a woman named Ruthie, who drove about in an aged and messy Volkswagen bug, whose place in this otherwise unpuzzling puzzle I couldn't quite figure out. When I asked, I was told, "Oh, Ruthie's from the sixties." From "the sixties," I thought then and still think, sounds like a country, and perhaps it is, but assuredly, to steal a bit of Yeats, no country for old men.

By the time I began teaching in the early 1970s, everyone already seemed to be in business for himself, looking for the best deal, which meant the least teaching for the most money at the most snobbishly well-regarded schools. The spirit of capitalism, for all that might be said on its behalf, wreaks

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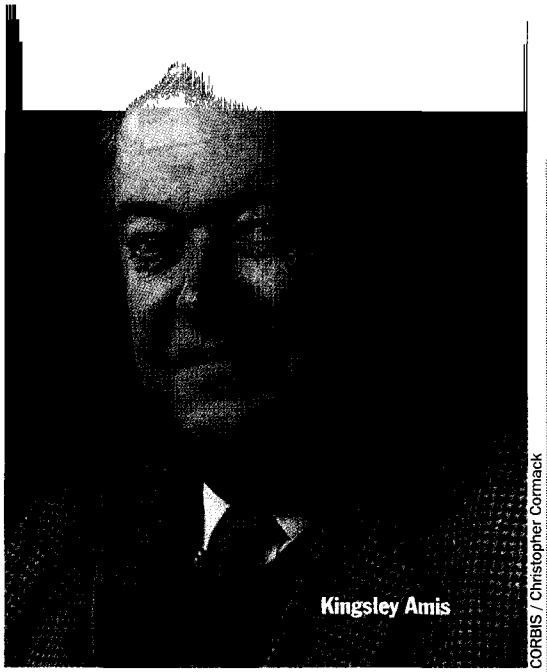
Kingsley Amis

CORBIS / Christopher Cormack

havoc when applied to culture and education. The English novelist David Lodge neatly caught this spirit at work when he created, in two of his academic novels, the character Morris Zapp. A scholar-operator, Zapp, as described by Lodge, "is well-primed to enter a profession as steeped in free enterprise as Wall Street, in which each scholar-teacher makes an individual contract with his employer, and is free to sell his services to the highest bidder." Said to be based on the Milton-man Stanley Fish, an identification that Fish apparently has never disavowed but instead glories in, Morris Zapp is the freebooter to a high power turned loose in academic settings: always attempting to strengthen his own position, usually delighted to be of disservice to the old ideal of academic dignity and integrity. Fish himself ended his days with a deanship at the University of Illinois in Chicago for a salary said to be $250,000, much less than a utility infielder in the major leagues makes but, for an academic, a big number.

By the time that the 1990s rolled around, all that was really left to the academic novel was to mock the mission of the university. With the onset of so-called theory in English and foreign-language departments, this became easier and easier to do. Professor Showalter does not approve of these goings-on: "The tone of ['90s academic novels]," she writes, "is much more vituperative, vengeful, and cruel than in earlier decades."

The crueler the blows are required, I should say, the better to capture the general atmosphere of goofiness, which has become pervasive. Theory and the hodgepodge of feminism, Marxism, and queer theory that resides comfortably alongside it, has now been in the saddle for roughly a quarter-century in American English and Romance-language departments, while also making incursions into history, philosophy, and other once-humanistic subjects. There has been very little to show for it —no great books, no splendid articles or essays, no towering figures who signify outside the academy itself—except declining enrollments in English and other department courses featuring such fare.

All that is left to such university teachers is the notion that they are, in a much-strained academic sense, *avant-garde*, which means that they continue to dig deeper and deeper for lower and lower forms of popular culture—graffiti on Elizabethan chamber pots—and human oddity. The best standard in the old days would have university scholars in literature and history departments publish books that could also be read with enjoyment and intellectual profit by nonscholars. Nothing of this kind is being produced today. In an academic thriller (a subdivision of the academic novel) cited by Showalter called *Murder at the MLA*, the head of the Wellesley English Department is found "dead as her prose." But almost all prose written in English departments these days is quite as dead as that English teacher.

For Professor Showalter, the old days were almost exclusively the bad old days. A good radical matron, she recounts manning the phones for the support group protesting, at the 1968 Modern Language Association meeting, "the organization's conservatism and old-boy governance." Now of course it almost seems as if the annual MLA meetings chiefly exist for journalists to write comic pieces featuring the zany subjects of the papers given at each year's conference. At these meetings, in and out the room the women come and go, speaking of fellatio, which, deep readers that they are, they can doubtless find in Jane Austen.

Such has been the politicization of the MLA that a counter-organization has been formed, called the Association of Literary Scholars and Critics, whose *raison d'être* is to get English studies back on track. I am myself a dues-paying ($35 annually) member of that organization. I do not go to its meetings, but I am sent the organization's newsletter and magazine, and they are a useful reminder of how dull English studies have traditionally been. But it is good to recall that dull is not ridiculous, dull is not always irrelevant, dull is not intellectual manure cast into the void.

The bad old days in English departments were mainly the dull old days, with more than enough pedants and dryasdusts to go round. But they did also produce a number of university teachers whose work reached beyond university walls and helped elevate the general culture: Jacques Barzun, Lionel Trilling, Ellen Moers, Walter Jackson Bate, Aileen Ward, Robert Penn Warren. The names from the bad new days seem to end with the entirely political Edward Said and Cornel West.

What we have today in universities is an extreme reaction to the dullness of that time, and also to the sheer exhaustion of subject matter for English department scholarship. No further articles and books about Byron, Shelley, Keats, or Kafka, Joyce, and the two Eliots seemed possible (which didn't of course stop them from coming). The pendulum has swung, but with a thrust so violent as to have gone through the cabinet in which the clock is stored.

From an academic novel I've not read called *The Death of a Constant Lover* (1999) by Lev Raphael, Professor Showalter quotes a passage that ends the novel on the following threnodic note:

> Whenever I'm chatting at conferences with faculty members from other universities, the truth comes out after a drink or two: Hardly any academics are happy where they are, no matter how apt the students, how generous the salary or perks, how beautiful the setting, how light the

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teaching load, how lavish the research budget. I don't know if it's academia itself that attracts misfits and malcontents, or if the overwhelming hypocrisy of that world would have turned even the von Trapp family sullen.

My best guess is that it's a good bit of both. Universities attract people who are good at school. Being good at school takes a real enough but very small talent. As the philosopher Robert Nozick once pointed out, all those A's earned through their young lives encourage such people to persist in school: to stick around, get more A's and more degrees, sign on for teaching jobs. When young, the life ahead seems glorious. They imagine themselves inspiring the young, writing important books, living out their days in cultivated leisure.

But something, inevitably, goes awry, something disagreeable turns up in the punch bowl. Usually by the time they turn 40, they discover the students aren't sufficiently appreciative; the books don't get written; the teaching begins to feel repetitive; the collegiality is seldom anywhere near what one hoped for it; there isn't any good use for the leisure. Meanwhile, people who got lots of B's in school seem to be driving around in Mercedes, buying million-dollar apartments, enjoying freedom and prosperity in a manner that strikes the former good students, now professors, as not only unseemly but of a kind a just society surely would never permit.

Now that politics has trumped literature in English departments the situation is even worse. Beset by political correctness, self-imposed diversity, without leadership from above, university teachers, at least on the humanities and social-science sides, knowing the work they produce couldn't be of the least possible interest to anyone but the hacks of the MLA and similar academic organizations, have more reason than ever to be unhappy.

And so let us leave them, overpaid and underworked, surly with alienation and unable to find any way out of the sweet racket into which they once so ardently longed to get. ♦

Iron Man

The human being behind the statistics.

BY JOHN P. ROSSI

Bettmann / CORBIS

Lou Gehrig, 1927

Every baseball fan knows the Lou Gehrig story. Two thousand, one hundred and thirty consecutive games played, a record that stood for almost 60 years. The first player in the modern era to hit four home runs in one game, only to be cut down in his prime by amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, the deadly disease to which he gave his name.

Luckiest Man
The Life and Death of Lou Gehrig
by Jonathan Eig
Simon & Schuster, 432 pp., $26

Jonathan Eig retells the familiar story in a different and more insightful way. His approach is not the usual baseball tale of hits and runs; instead, he attempts to get beyond Gehrig's great career to reach the complicated human being he really was.

Eig portrays Gehrig as shy and insecure, always seeking authority, whether it was from his unemotional mother (who dominated him until

John P. Rossi is professor of history at La Salle University. His book, The 1964 Phillies: The Story of Baseball's Most Memorable Collapse, *will be published this month.*

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he married at age 30) or from his Yankee managers, Miller Huggins and Joe McCarthy, who were substitute father figures. His wife, Eleanor Twitchell, effectively ran his life from their marriage in 1933 until his death eight years later. She also cultivated his reputation: She was adviser to the making of *The Pride of the Yankees*, the film that starred Gary Cooper as Gehrig and which garnered 11 Academy Award nominations in 1942.

Gehrig played in the shadow of two of the most colorful Yankee stars, Babe Ruth and Joe DiMaggio, both of whom were lionized by sportswriters. Gehrig never seemed to mind, however, and went about his business setting records. In many ways he was a perfect athlete for the Depression decade: patient, hard working, well behaved, someone who had climbed out of poverty. But despite his impressive credentials, fans never warmed to the diffident, colorless Gehrig until he developed the illness that ended his career in May 1939. Eig argues that ALS appeared earlier than previously believed, finding evidence of it in Gehrig's behavior as early as 1938 spring training. ALS humanized Gehrig, in Eig's view: A man who habitually spoke in baseball clichés, Gehrig was surprisingly eloquent when he bade farewell to the game by saying that he considered himself "the luckiest man on the face of the earth."

Gehrig never understood what he was fighting against: His wife and doctors decided that it was better to let him believe he had a chance to overcome his illness, which he battled with the same tenacity that characterized his play. In today's world of steroid-inflated statistics, it is difficult to remember what a gifted player Gehrig was. Despite having his career shortened by at least two or three years, he still finished with a lifetime batting average of .340, the third highest slugging average in baseball history, and 1,990 runs batted in. In seven seasons he drove in 150 or more runs, a record that is unlikely to be topped. ♦

Jane Fonda Remembers

She's still searching for the role of a lifetime.

BY CYNTHIA GRENIER

What can you say about nearly 600 pages of passionate self-justification covering some 67 years of life, lived pretty much in the public eye for most of that time?

In the interests of full disclosure, I should say that some 34 years ago Helen Gurley Brown flew my late husband Richard to New York to do an in-depth interview with Jane Fonda while she was shooting *Klute*, a film for which she won her first Academy Award for Best Actress. Somewhere, I suppose, I still have those 14 hours on tape of their talk together. And despite the intervening years, two more husbands, considerable success as an exercise guru, the acceptance of a modified Jesus in her life, and that shaming trip to Hanoi which remains very much alive in people's memories, Jane today sounds unmistakably like the same passionate, slightly ditzy woman she was back then. ("I'm a pacifist and I would fight to the death to defend it, *but I would pick up a gun tomorrow*.")

Reuters / CORBIS / Michael Tweed

My Life So Far
by Jane Fonda
Random House, 624 pp., $26.95

Cynthia Grenier writes the Mag Trade *column for the* Washington Times.

She gives readers bountiful detail on her quite miserable childhood. The unloving mother who slit her own throat when Jane was 12. The famous actor father, cold as ice. Her recollections of having been molested as a child (perhaps by a nanny's boyfriend). And her bulimia, which lasted until well into her forties. No question that she had an insecure, unhappy childhood and adolescence that left her with problems to be worked out as she continued to mature.

Lee Strasberg, the mighty mentor of the Actors' Studio, accepted her at 22 into his classes, and the day he told her, "I see a lot of people go through here, Jane, but you have real talent," she felt transformed. "I had never been so happy," she writes. She played a few leads in light Hollywood films, and then in 1963 got an offer from the French director René Clément to costar with Alain Delon, the top European box office draw of the day. Paris was like love at first sight, she burbles. (Actually it was her second visit.) This sojourn gives her the opportunity to discuss with superb naiveté how the French felt about communism, and what kind of understanding that gave her of politics. Although, as

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she says, "I was not politically active then and especially not interested in theory or ideology (still not, to this day), and no one suggested I should be."

Then she was spending time with her new chums, Simone Signoret and Yves Montand, the superstars of the French Communist party—although she only recalls them agreeing "with many of the party's opinions." After the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, Montand went on French television to state unequivocally, *Nous etions des cons*. This is a colloquial way of saying "We were fools," except that *cons* is a much stronger word.

Of course, Jane Fonda has never said anything remotely comparable regarding her glory days as "Hanoi Jane," sitting there giddily at the North Vietnamese antiaircraft gun, gleefully clapping her hands. Oh, she has said things like "That was the most stupid, naive thing I could have done. I will go to my grave regretting that—not going to North Vietnam, but that photograph." This doesn't keep her from devoting over 60 pages to arguing why it was so wrong for the United States to fight in Vietnam, complete with footnotes and boldface for emphasis.

Bettmann / CORBIS

Hollywood, 1960

She also takes the opportunity to opine on the role of women and leadership. "I continue to be amazed," she writes, "at the number of women I consider strong leaders, who worry about 'taking up too much space in meetings,' worry about being 'too assertive' in expressing their ideas and needs, become little girls again in the presence of male 'authority' figures. Once we women are able to *own* our leadership, to embody our power (and more and more women are—including myself), the world will be a better place indeed."

Before she reached this stage in her life she had her *Barbarella* years, living with and then married to the French director Roger Vadim, one-time husband of Brigitte Bardot and Annette Stroyberg, and father of Catherine Deneuve's son. Vadim's lifestyle was given to fairly freewheeling ways in matters sexual. Jane ties herself in knots explaining how it was all-important to her, in those days, to please her man. And if her man wanted to bring a high-class call girl into her bed, then it was imperative she go along with it and "eventually had myself convinced I enjoyed it." (In her 1971 interview, she confessed, "Look, I've slept with married men who were extremely happy with, and in love with, their wives.")

With second husband Tom Hayden, she was "head over heels" in love when he told her how the U.S. government and the South Vietnamese were trying to overthrow the culture of centuries, and replace it with a consumer-driven *Playboy* culture to make Vietnamese women ashamed of their slight Asian bodies and seek breast implants. Jane began crying, and felt "he was someone with depth and soul, different from any man I'd ever met." The next paragraph opens with them "making love on the living room floor." (Jane herself had implants for a time, having

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Hanoi, 1972

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On the Mike Douglas Show, 1979

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them removed only in her sixties.)

Then came Hanoi, where Hayden thought she should go by herself. She bravely maintains, at the beginning of her Hanoi chapter, that the image suggested by the antiaircraft gun picture "had no relationship whatsoever to what I was doing or thinking at the time." When she returns to the arms of Tom Hayden in a room at the Chelsea Hotel, she tells him she wants them to have a child together as "a pledge of hope for the future. We held each other and wept."

The night she turned 51, Hayden told her he loved another woman. "Never," she writes, "could I imagine such emotional pain." Then there were therapists, even psychics, and the day her divorce was announced in the press, she got a call from Ted Turner asking, first, for confirmation of the divorce and, second, whether she would like to go out with him. Before she and Turner become a couple there is a tall, dark, handsome Italian, seventeen years younger, with whom she falls "in lust" but who vanishes from her pages with no more mention than that.

Ten years of marriage with Ted Turner involve a great deal of travel in high style from one ranch to another, from the American West to Tierra del Fuego. Turner is described vividly, and with enough detail to make any woman wonder why on earth she would have an affair with, let alone marry, such a character unless it were for purely economic reasons. He appears to have been faithful, except for one "nooner," and for Jane's 60th birthday he gave her a $10 million family foundation. Interestingly, as she's beginning to feel things are not working out for her and Turner, she abruptly announces, "Out of love and respect for Ted and his children, I will not go into specifics about what was not working in our relationship. Quite honestly it is not necessary."

With Ted Turner, 1995

CORBIS / Sygma / John Van Hasselt

By then, Jane had found Jesus—well, sort of—but was terrified of telling Turner. He was the man, after all, who had declared, "Christianity is for losers." She writes: "I find it impossible to have that [spiritual] experience when I cannot reconcile myself to the Judeo-Christian assumption that man was God's principal creation, with woman as a mere derivative afterthought." But she finds there was a reason women were among Jesus' most ardent followers, responding as they did to "his revolutionary message of compassion, love, and *equality*."

Her conclusion, after nearly 70 years on this planet, is this: "If our civilization hadn't been built on devaluating, fearing, and denigrating women, men wouldn't split head from heart and distance themselves from their emotions, which are supposed to be the domain of women." So we leave Jane Fonda and Jesus together, waiting to see what turn her life will take. ♦

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Books in Brief

***Being Dead Is No Excuse: The Official Southern Ladies Guide to Hosting the Perfect Funeral* by Gayden Metcalfe and Charlotte Hays (Miramax, 256 pp., $19.95)** In *Being Dead Is No Excuse*, Gayden Metcalfe and Charlotte Hays detail everything you need to know about putting on an authentic southern funeral—how to write the obituary (skip any indiscretions), where to bury the dead (location, location, location), how to get a big turnout without increasing the liquor bill (only if the deceased went to both the local Episcopal church and AA), what flowers to choose, and, of course, the cuisine.

In the Mississippi Delta, where Metcalfe and Hays grew up, "funeral cooking is two-tiered." There's the *haute* funeral food—aspics, homemade mayonnaise, and dainty rolls. The rest are Campbell's soup based.

The book includes at least 100 recipes for dishes like Liketa Died Potatoes (which uses both real cheddar cheese and cheddar cheese soup), corn loaf, pickled figs, beer cheese pimiento, and ham mousse. Stuffed eggs are so important a whole section is devoted to discussing their virtues.

It's important to distinguish between Episcopal and Methodist cooking. Episcopalians are stuck up about mixes and canned goods, which they shun, while the Methodist ladies work wonders with them. "If a survey were done of the winners of the Pillsbury Bake Offs—ten to one, the winners would be Methodists," they write.

One warning Metcalfe and Hays offer is that when it comes to funeral food, "fresh is *not* best." "A leafy green salad just doesn't seem right when someone has died," they explain. One Yankee niece who attended her Aunt Bitsy's funeral in the Delta remarked during the reception that she'd eaten enough Velveeta and mushroom soup to last until her own funeral and asked for a Cobb salad instead. Her Aunt Sarah promptly wrote her out of her will. "Somebody so unsouthern wouldn't have the foggiest notion what to do with the family silver," she huffed.

The authors employ dozens of such anecdotes to amusing effect. Some, like the story of the woman who got Botox and hired a private jet to take her to attend her philandering ex-husband's funeral ("for the children" she told everyone), are so outrageous you almost wonder if they really happened.

Then there was Big Ann Dudley, who almost buried her husband in the deluxe JFK coffin, modeled on the one in which the president was laid to rest. Luckily her daughter, Little Ann, intervened. "Mama," she wailed, "you can't put Daddy in the JFK. He was a devoted Republican."

Along the way the authors also explain a few southernisms, like why southern women polish their silver when they're upset (memories of defending it from the Yankees), why teenage southern girls are trained by their mothers to sleep so late (endless dances and cotillions), and why certain papers list obituaries alphabetically instead of using a social hierarchy (local papers are owned by Northerners who don't know who's who).

Being Dead Is No Excuse is a delightful book that will leave even those readers who've never traveled below the Mason-Dixon Line equipped to send their loved ones off in perfect southern style.

—*Rachel DiCarlo*

***South Park Conservatives: The Revolt against Liberal Media Bias* by Brian C. Anderson (Regnery, 256 pp., $24.95)** Remember the good old days when *Time* could compare Ronald Reagan's life and his supporters to Forrest Gump's and get away with it? Fortunately, those days are over, as Brian Anderson tells us in his new biopic of the emerging cultural uprising against "illiberal liberalism," the Fairness Doctrine, political correctness, "stinky hippy" college professors, and all things Barbra Streisand.

In *South Park Conservatives*, Anderson first delves into the world of "the new media"—talk radio, blogs, and Fox News—and offers a colorful description of each new outlet and its often audacious pioneers.

These new media outlets, bolstered in quantity and quality by the rise of technology, have become the conservative movement's primary spearheads in public discourse.

Since "the old-media regime long made it hard for the Right to get a fair hearing for its ideas and beliefs," Anderson makes it seem only logical that conservatives took advantage of the radio waves, cable television, and the Internet.

Inspired by new media's message, many young Americans have become part of an "anti-liberal counterculture" committed to ignoring political correctness. While many members of this movement are traditional conservatives, others are "South Park Republicans," who have adopted certain conservative beliefs but not others.

"The label is really about rejecting the image of conservatives as uptight squares. We might have long hair, smoke cigarettes, get drunk on weekends . . . and also happen to be conservative," one undergraduate told Anderson.

South Park Conservatives is more than just the run of the mill liberals-control-the-media shtick. Anderson's entertaining reporting style, documentation of this new segment of the youth culture, and articulate judgments make his book a quick and refreshing read.

—*Jordan Fabian*

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Not a Parody

2 Journos Fired for Drinking With Subjects of Beer-Pong Story

By Editor & Publisher Staff

NEW YORK, April 25 — When reporter Craig McCool and photographer Mairin Chapman of The Kalamazoo (Mich.) Gazette went to a local party to research a series on drinking among young adults, they saw nothing wrong with partaking of the libations themselves.

But editors did. The result: The two were dismissed, and the paper ran an editor's note this weekend explaining the incident.

"Their conduct is unacceptable and violates the standards that we uphold every day as journalists," Editor Rebecca Pierce said in the note, published Saturday. "We don't condone it and we can't ignore it."

Pierce, who could not be reached for comment Monday, seemed to indicate that the pair's transgression took on more severity because it involved their reporting on how heavy alcohol consumption can be dangerous. "It's a sad statement to our readers that our behavior in any way would obscure this serious and pervasive problem in our community," the editor added in the note.

McCool and Chapman had attended the party to observe a drinking game called "beer-pong," the editor's note said. That story was among several published in a three-day series on the issue, which ended April 19.

The paper revealed that the reporter and photographer did not reveal their alcohol consumption until after the story ran. Editors also indicated that they were misled to believe that the beer-pong story occurred during one night, when it actually involved events over two nights.

"The misconduct of the two staff members led the paper to conduct staff-wide discussions about ethics," the note said. "Further sessions are planned."

McCool and Chapman could not be reached for comment and messages left for them through editors have not been returned.

The paper quoted McCool as apologizing for his actions. "I as a reporter need to be held accountable," he told editors. "The people in this organization work hard not only to keep the community informed, but to gather and dispense the news in a reputable and ethical manner. While reporting for the story in question, I forgot those ideals."

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

October 1945, New York, New York, USA — Men and women socialize at Blake's Bar, also known as "Artists and Writers" because of the many journalists who stop by from the Herald Tribune.

1954, Monte Carlo, Monaco — Journalists at the bar in the Press coach at the Monte Carlo motor rally.

1945, München-Gladbach, Germany — War correspondents hold an informal liberation party at Goebbels's residence.

American journalist and author Ernest Hemingway in postwar France.

From top: Jerry Cooke / CORBIS; Hulton-Deutsch Collection / CORBIS; CORBIS; Hulton-Deutsch Collection / CORBIS

the weekly Standard

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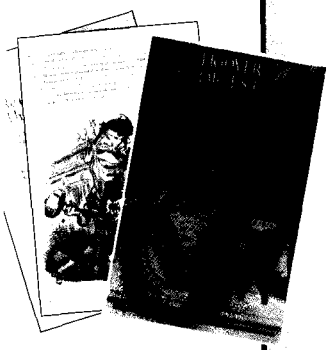
Tough Times at F

HOOVER DIGEST
RESEARCH AND OPINION ON PUBLIC POLICY



FREE ISSUE

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The Food and Drug Administration is being buffeted by a kind of perfect storm. First there were claims that the labeling of certain antidepressants failed to warn doctors that the drugs caused some adolescents to commit suicide. Then the agency was blindsided by contamination that made half the nation's flu vaccine supply unavailable. Thereafter came revelations about apparent side effects of several widely prescribed anti-inflammatory analgesic drugs.

Taking a candidate drug from discovery in the lab to the marketplace requires 12 to 15 years and more than $800 million in direct and indirect costs. On average, it involves more than 60 clinical trials with more than 4,000 patients, but even this extensive testing may not elicit all possible reactions to a new drug. Thus, regulators must always make decisions on the basis of data that are, in a sense, incomplete. Infrequent side effects, or adverse events, might not show up until hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of patients are exposed to the drug in normal use.

Drug companies must report adverse events and injuries caused by their products to the FDA, but they depend on practicing physicians to provide these data. Because doctors are unlikely to notice side effects that occur in only a small percentage of their patient populations and are under no legal obligation to communicate adverse events at all, underreporting is common.

The "safety" of a drug is a relative thing. Safety and efficacy, the two criteria required for marketing approval of a drug, are inextricably linked; [illegible] a potent [illegible] for [illegible] cancer or AIDS, for example, than for a drug for treating heartburn. When the FDA grants marketing approval for a given product, that drug is deemed to be safe and effective for the conditions on the label.

The efficient detection of side effects is essential, and the United States needs to improve *pharmacovigilance*—the monitoring of the safety of approved drugs. But the newly created FDA Drug Safety Oversight Board is not the answer. **Rather than more bureaucrats, we must have better data.**

We need to encourage physicians' reporting of adverse events (perhaps by rewarding them with the Continuing Medical Education credits they need to retain licensure), to contract with organizations that treat large patient populations to monitor and report adverse events, and to share data with foreign regulators. We might also consider some variation of the United Kingdom's "yellow card" system, in which doctors, dentists, and pharmacists report adverse events to federal regulators (on a small yellow card, of course).

But we will not get any of these improvements—or for that matter, desperately needed reforms to redress the FDA's chronic risk aversion and overregulation of drug testing—without strong leadership. Lester Crawford, the president's nominee for commissioner, hardly seems the person for the job, but let us hope he will rise to the occasion and provide it.

—Henry I. Miller

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